Dungeon®
ADVENTURES FOR TSR ROLE-PLAYING GAMES
JULY/AUGUST 1993 ISSUE #42
VOL VII, NO. 6 $3.75 USA

# Dungeon®

ADVENTURES FOR TSR ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

JULY/AUGUST 1993 ISSUE #42

COVER: The Vistani of Ravenloft walk the Mists without fear. This issue's cover by Scott Burdick depicts one gypsy who isn't likely to lose her way. For more on the Vistani, see "The Price of Revenge" by Steve Kurtz.

## Staging an Encounter

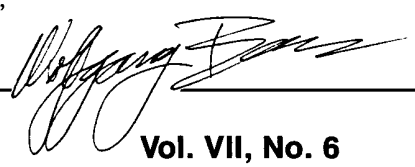
Every issue of DUNGEON® Adventures provides great modules, but any adventure is just a framework until a DM decides to turn the words on a page into a story shared with friends. To run even a short adventure, a Dungeon Master must stage many individual encounters, making each one come to life for the players.

The tricks of proper staging can turn an average adventure into a spooky occasion. I once ran an old Judges Guild adventure called *The House on Hangman Hill*, a fairly ordinary crawl that made me want to spook the players. When the party entered the haunted house, I turned down a dimmer switch and let the kitchen faucet drip during the whole game session. One of the player was so thrown by this that his brave fighter character acted much more fearful and cautious than usual.

These tricks can liven up any game. Sound works well, since you can play a recording in the background while the game goes on. Organ music when the party meets a vampire is an obvious choice, but it's also worth investing in a few albums of sound effects like wind or rain. Give players something to touch: old keys from a thrift shop, bits of glass for magical gems, photos of an appropriate landscape, or copies of maps and letters with wax seals on them. Even using a few hand gestures or a funny voice can help. During a *Call of Cthulhu* adventure last year, the judge sent our characters on a tour of Europe, cooking appropriate national dishes for us for each week's session. As you can see, staging a single encounter can be as simple or as elaborate as the DM cares to make it.

Tell us about any favorite techniques that have worked well—or the one that fell completely flat. Are there any DUNGEON adventures that you spiced up with special props or scenery? Write to us and share your favorite staging tricks with fellow readers! We'd like to hear from you.

This issue's quote was provided by Steve Kurtz, who feels it works well with his RAVENLOFT® adventure, "The Price of Revenge."




**Vol. VII, No. 6**

PUBLISHER: James M. Ward
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ART DIRECTOR: Larry W. Smith
CARTOGRAPHER: Diesel
TYPESETTING: TSR Graphic Art Services
SUBSCRIPTIONS: Janet L. Winters

Printed in U.S.A.



The Readers — **LETTERS** ..... *6*

J. Bradley Schell — **WHISTLEDOWN'S MANTRAP** (AD&D® SideTrek adventure, levels 3-4) The dryad, the mantrap, her mate, and its meal ..... *8*

Peter Åberg — **THE LADY OF THE MISTS** (AD&D adventure, levels 6-8) Some people live past their time, others linger on as ghosts. The Lady could be either. ..... *10*

Gary Lai — **IZEK'S SLUMBER** (AD&D SideTrek adventure, level 12-14 wizard or level 7-10 party) Sometimes you should let sleeping wizards lie. ..... *32*

David Howery — **RANSOM** (D&D® game adventure, levels 3-5) Deliver the money, bring home the boy: A simple exchange gone wrong. ..... *36*

Chris Hind — **LEGACY OF THE LIOSALFAR** (AD&D game adventure, level 1) The elven war of light and darkness is long over, but not quite forgotten. ..... *40*

Steve Kurtz — **THE PRICE OF REVENGE** (AD&D game RAVENLOFT® adventure, levels 4-6) Welcome to Ungrad: Friendly people, hot stew, and a cold death await you. ..... *50*


Cowards die many times before their deaths; the valiant never taste of death but once. Of all the wonders that I yet have heard, it seems to me most strange that men should fear; seeing that death, a necessary end, will come when it will come.

William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*

# LETTERS

## To Plot or Not

I'd like to respond to several comments made in your "Letters" section in issue #41. Particularly, I'd like to respond to Adam C. Chunn's letter. While I agree with Adam that the often plot-intensive adventures in DUNGEON® Magazine may make ". . . DMs whose strong suit is developing their own story feel like they must succumb to another person's creations," I also believe that those DMs would, quite frankly, be better off not referring to DUNGEON Magazine very often at all.

There are many other products, like the *Book of Lairs* series, that have what Adam seems to be looking for: simple encounters, complete with monsters, maps, traps, and treasure. Also, detailed maps and generic encounters don't strike me as particularly hard for a DM to design, especially for a DM who likes to work his own plots. Instead, what is often difficult to develop is what DUNGEON Adventures provides: interesting, original, and developed plotlines and NPCs. But take away the plotlines, and each issue also has plenty of maps and monsters to satisfy the "old-school" gamer.

In short, I believe that many of the old modules that Adam refers to, like the classic *Against the Giants* series by Gary Gygax, represent a time when role-playing games were still a young concept, and the distinction between the strategy game and the RPG had not been fully realized. Nowadays, the gaming audience has matured, realizing that what makes RPGs different and more exciting is the *role-playing,* which requires strong plotlines. In other words, I believe it is the older, more experienced gaming audience that has initiated this shift to plot gradually, leading the younger, inexperienced generation by example. I do not believe, as Adam suggests, that they remain steadfast to the statistics-intensive, plot-unintensive "dungeon scenario."

Please keep the plots in DUNGEON Adventures, and there will still be an abundance of "plotless" scenarios to go around.

I'd also like to say, in response to Yaron Berman's letter in issue #41, and to the many other hopeful writers frustrated over proposal rejections: Don't give up! Every rejection brings you one step closer to an acceptance. Every author that has ever published anything can tell you that. For instance, before DUNGEON Magazine published my adventure "Hopeful Dawn," I had to rewrite it four times! I have also had ten proposals rejected and two manuscripts that got past the proposal stage and which I revised several times, only to be eventually rejected as well! Behind every success there are at least a dozen failures.

Gary Lai
Ithaca, New York

## Willie's Scorecard

I reckon I've sent you 38 proposals since (before) DUNGEON Adventures began, 23 of which made full manuscripts. Of these, 17 were accepted for publication. Acceptance = 44.7%. Rejection = 55.3%. Quote me if you want.

Willie Walsh
Dublin, Republic of Ireland

## Character-Centered Adventures

It's quite difficult to get DUNGEON Magazine in Israel, especially in Jerusalem, where no store regularly sells any role-playing materials. Even when I do find an issue, I first look at the adventures inside before I buy it.

I DMed only one DUNGEON adventure, "The Curse and the Quest" from issue #26. It did go nicely, but I still prefer to create my own adventures.

One problem I have with ready-made adventures comes from my belief that adventures should be created around the player characters, especially at high level. But ideas from DUNGEON Adventures can still be helpful. I'd like more low- and high-level adventures, because it's more difficult to write adventures for these levels (most monsters are mid level).

Another problem is that DUNGEON adventures seem not to encourage role-playing but rather problem solving and fights. I especially disliked "The Mud Sorcerer's Tomb" in issue #37, where you need to find keys in the most illogical places, and need to use specific spells to save a companion (or the whole party) with little time to do so. What if you didn't study the spell that day?

By the way, I just noticed that the editor of this magazine is female. I love seeing women at key positions in magazines whose subjects are considered male dominated, mainly computers and role-playing games. It seems to indicate that there's hope after all.

Eyal Teler
Jerusalem, Israel

## Psionics & Power

I would like to respond to Todd Meyrath's letter in issue #41, which argues that "psionics are *too* powerful." Of course, a psionicist in a world full of fighters and wizards is going to be a powerful destabilizing force—but psionicists should not even exist in such a scenario. Psionicists, by their very na-

DUNGEON® (ISSN 0890-7102) is published bimonthly by TSR, Inc., 201 Sheridan Springs Road, Lake Geneva WI 53147 U.S.A. The mailing address for all material **except** subscription orders is DUNGEON®, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147 U.S.A.; telephone (414) 248-3625; fax (414) 248-0389.

**Distribution:** DUNGEON is available from game and hobby shops throughout the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, and through a limited number of other overseas outlets. Distribution to the book trade in the United States is by Random House, Inc., and in Canada by Random House of Canada, Ltd. Distributed to the book trade in the United Kingdom is by TSR Ltd. Send orders to: Random House, Inc., Order Entry Department, Westminster MD 21157, U.S.A.; telephone: (800) 733-3000.

**Subscriptions:** Subscription rates via second-class mail are as follows: $18 in U.S. funds for six issues sent to an address in the U.S., $23 in U.S. funds for delivery to Canada, $35 in U.S. funds for surface mail delivery to any other address, and $52 in U.S. funds for air mail delivery to any other address. Prices are subject to change without notice. Payment in full must accompany all subscription orders. Payment should be by check or money order, made payable to TSR, Inc., or by charges to valid MasterCard or VISA credit cards. Send subscription orders with payments to: TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 5695, Boston MA 02206. The issue of expiration of each subscription is printed on the mailing label for each subscriber's copy of the magazine. Changes of address for the delivery of subscription copies must be received at least six weeks prior to the effective date of the change, in order to assure uninterrupted delivery.

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Second-class postage paid at Lake Geneva, Wis., U.S.A. and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to DUNGEON, c/o TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A.

ture, are specialized in the mental disciplines. For a character like this to arise in a world devoid of psionics just isn't plausible.

In a world with psionics, non-psionicists are going to be equipped to deal with psionic threats. For priests and wizards, this means creating spells and magical items to repel, enhance, or utterly block psionic intrusion. In my campaigns, I ruled that the *mind bar* spell, the *ring of mind shielding,* and the *amulet of proof against detection and location* also had the side effect of shutting out psionic intrusion. Of course, characters using such spells and devices could not use psionics themselves.

Fighters will recognize that psionics—like spell-casting—requires enormous concentration. Remember that if someone disturbs a psionicist while he is trying to initiate one of his powers, the attempt automatically fails, just like spell-casting. The party psionicist needs to be behind a protective rank of allies when using his mental abilities in combat. A fighter need only give a psionicist a good hard shove to interrupt his concentration. Rogues will develop poisons that work only against psionic-using characters . . . and so on. In short, the traditional character classes all have strategies for defeating psionic opponents. No psionicist—no matter how powerful—is going to stand up against a properly equipped band of traditional characters.

Psionics is one of those arts, like magic, that some characters are just better off without. Some really horrible monsters (described at the end of the *Complete Psionics Handbook*) are attracted to and feed on psionic activity. In a world where psionics is common, you can be certain that these creatures will be relatively common. Once psionicists advance in levels and become really cocky, a properly handled encounter with githyanki or githzerai will send them a painfully rude wake-up call. These creatures can be utterly devastating against psionicists (and just about anything else, for that matter), since even the weakest of their races are extensively trained in psionics. A party of six low-level githyanki, having joined their minds with Convergence and warded their collective intellects with Towers of Iron Will, will squish even a powerful human psionicist like a bug.

In the proper setting, psionicists are not too powerful, merely another character class that has its benefits and drawbacks, like any other. That does not mean psionics has no place in a normal AD&D® world, however. A wild talent fits in anywhere and can be especially amusing if the DM keeps all knowledge of psionics from the players. For instance, there is a wizard in my current campaign who shows Sensitivity to Psychic Impressions. I have not let him look at the *CPH,* and I have never made any kind of reference to psionics during play. About one time per gaming session, I take the player aside and tell him about the disturbing images he sees when he enters an area or handles an object for the first time. Not only does it make for more interesting play and character development (the wizard is somewhat shunned by his compatriots, who consider him mildly cursed), but it allows me to introduce key facts and details in a way that I can control. Of course, making psionics "transparent" to the players can be a time-consuming process, but it also builds up mystique and suspense.

The real disadvantage to psionics—from the DM's point of view—is the amount of time involved in generating psionic encounters. Psionic monsters and NPCs are incredibly time consuming to create and flesh out, perhaps even more difficult to generate than powerful wizards. Some psionic "SideTreks" would be a useful way to address that need without devoting too much space in DUNGEON Magazine. Few DMs (except those using the DARK SUN® setting) have full-blown psionics campaigns, but a psionics encounter now and then would be a very useful DM time-saver.

Steve Kurtz
Ithaca, New York

## *Adventure Chains*

I would like to take this opportunity to answer your request about how a DM can string a series of separate adventures into a much longer storyline.

I recently started some 1st- and 2nd-level characters in the Forgotten Realms. The adventurers started in a scenario called "Ogre Forest," by Mega Games Ltd. The PCs entered a small farming town with a tavern. There they learned that the daughter of the local

Continued on page 70

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# WHISTLED

## A little path of horrors.

BY J. BRADLEY SCHELL

Artwork by L. A. Williams

"Whistledown's Mantrap" is an AD&D® game mini-adventure for 3-6 player characters of level 3-4 (about 16 total levels). A party that contains at least one elf will have a better chance of survival than one that doesn't, but an elf is not necessary for the successful completion of this adventure. Also, the adventure is more entertaining if at least one of the male PCs is above average in appearance.

The setting for this adventure is a deep tropical forest somewhere well off the beaten path. This scenario works best if played like a random encounter, giving the PCs little idea of the danger that faces them.

### Adventure Background

Whistledown, a dryad of average beauty, lives in a thick forest in a tropical region. Because of the climate, hers is one of only a few oak trees in the area, making Whistledown a rather lonely dryad. For this reason, the dryad has always been particularly interested in male companionship.

Unfortunately for Whistledown, her secluded location precludes a great deal of contact with handsome males. Most of the males she has met have been elvish and naturally resistant to her charms, and the rest were lost to her through a series of unfortunate mishaps ranging from sickness to orcs.

Thus, when Miltonar, a half-elven wizard, and his party passed through her territory, she was excited to see a handsome apprentice among them. She quickly used her *charm* ability on the young man, then vanished into her oak tree, taking the apprentice with her.

The wizard was not one to let his apprentice go so easily. Using the threat of a *fireball* and his natural resistance to *charm*, the wizard forced Whistledown to bargain with him for the apprentice. Knowing much about the creatures of the forest (he was an amateur naturalist in his spare time), the wily Miltonar offered the dryad a mantrap seed, which he had been saving for a dire emergency. She thought for only a moment before accepting the wizard's offer, influenced by the plant's name (and perhaps the threat of the *fireball*).

Whistledown has not regretted the bargain. She raised the plant from the seed as only a dryad can, resulting in a healthy and loyal companion. In addition to providing excellent protection for her territory, the mantrap occasionally catches a human male who might otherwise have gotten away unnoticed.

The dryad uses her *speak with plants* ability to free the plant's catch. If he's attractive enough, Whistledown attempts to *charm* him. If he doesn't meet her standards of male beauty, she sends him on his way, only slightly worse for the wear. Thus, her bargain with the wizard has enabled Whistledown to create a happy and respectable dryad life.

Whistledown's current companion is a fighter named Cruther, who was traveling through the forest with a party of adventurers when he was snared by the mantrap's pollen. The rest of his party, being highly unethical, abandoned him to his fate rather than risk the carnivorous plant. Whistledown was attracted by Cruther's rugged good looks, broad shoulders, and straight blonde hair and so saved him from the plant.

Cruther currently lives in a crook of Whistledown's oak tree, subsisting on fruit, berries, and greens. Cruther is totally enamored with Whistledown and will fight to the death if anyone threatens her. However, he will not get within 60′ of the mantrap unless Whistledown gives him a direct order. He knows firsthand the dangers of the plant!

Whistledown ignores Cruther's bullying, selfish behavior in favor of his good looks and is happy with him. However, his presence will not stop her from adding another man, or even two more, to

# OWN'S MANTRAP

her collection, and the *charmed* Cruther will make no complaint.

**Cruther:** AL LE; AC 4; MV 12; F2; hp 13; THAC0 19 (+1 with spear, +1 for Strength); #AT 3/2 (with spear), 1 otherwise; Dmg by weapon type (+2 with spear, +1 for Strength); S 17, D 12, C 15, I 10, W 5, Ch 17; ML 14; chain mail, shield, spear (specialization).

### Whistledown's Territory

The home of the dryad Whistledown looks much like the rest of the forest, overgrown with wild brambles and thick trees. Light filters down from the thick canopy above, and the air is thick with the odor of moist vegetation. The one unique feature about this territory is the scarcity of animals and birds (most of them have been eaten by the carnivorous plant). A narrow animal path runs through the western side of Whistledown's territory, passing directly next to the mantrap, a huge (20′ tall, 20′ wide) bush with broad green leaves and purple blossoms.

**Mantrap:** INT non; AL N; AC 6; MV nil; HD 5; hp 30; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg victim's AC, minimum 1; SA pollen, acid; SZ H; ML 12; XP 430; MC2 (Plant, Carnivorous).

The mantrap has thrived under the watchful care of the dryad and has been very successful at keeping itself fed with animals and birds who venture too close. This has helped Whistledown protect her territory's plant life from the ravages of hungry creatures, giving the plant further value to the dryad in addition to its ability to catch men.

As noted in the *Monstrous Compendium,* mantraps attack using a seductive pollen. Anyone approaching within 60′ of the plant must make a saving throw vs. poison or climb into one of the plant's three leaf traps. Once the victim is trapped, only the destruction of the plant or orders from the dryad can save him. It takes two rounds for Whistledown to free anyone caught by the plant. Therefore, anyone trapped within the plant's leaves will take two rounds of damage. Note that as a "plant spirit," Whistledown is immune to the effects of the mantrap's pollen. The same cannot be said for anyone whom the dryad *charms.*

Whistledown's oak tree is located on a small knoll 40 yards to the east of the mantrap. From here, Whistledown can watch over the most-traveled path through her territory. If she sees a group of travelers approaching the mantrap, she waits to see their response before reacting.

If no one in the party is very attractive, and the group manages to avoid the mantrap, Whistledown sighs and goes back to whatever she was doing. If the mantrap captures some but not all of the PCs, and the rest respond violently, the dryad and Cruther engage the remaining PCs in combat to protect the plant. If one of the PCs attracts Whistledown's fancy, she'll do what she can to get him in her clutches. She will negotiate with any PC she cannot *charm,* offering to free the rest of the party from the mantrap if this will influence the PC to agree to be her mate.

**Whistledown** (dryad): INT 14; AL N; AC 9; MV 12; HD 2; hp 10; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4 (knife); SA *charm*; SD *dimension door, speak with plants;* MR 50%; SZ M; ML 12; MC2.

Whistledown is a quick, mischievous wood spirit who spends much of her time dallying with Cruther. She is gregarious by nature and willing to talk to any nonthreatening stranger about almost any subject, whether she knows anything about it or not.

The dryad has little concern for most other creatures, saving all of her compassion for the vegetation in her territory. She takes their care seriously, working very hard to maintain all plant life in the area. As a result, the plants in her territory thrive, making her home a rich, healthy forest.

Whistledown will enter into combat only if attacked, or if any of her plants are threatened. In combat, she uses her *charm* ability to best effect, targeting the most powerful foe first. Once this target succumbs, she turns him against his former comrades while she tries to *charm* another. When her *charm* runs out, Whistledown uses her knife. She will also command Cruther to protect her.

### Concluding the Adventure

If Cruther is freed from Whistledown's *charm,* he quickly develops into a hot-tempered bully who uses his brawn and skill at weapons to try to intimidate those around him. He cannot stand being a follower. He always wants to lead and is always certain that he is right. If the PCs don't agree to his role as leader, he will abandon or betray them at the first opportunity.

Not all encounters with Whistledown should lead to combat. As long as the PCs do not attack the dryad, Cruther, or her plants, and as long as none of the party is exceptionally attractive or charismatic (16+ Charisma), the PCs can pass through Whistledown's territory unmolested. Because the only path through this area runs right next to the mantrap, however, this seems unlikely to occur. Nevertheless, a clever or exceptionally lucky party might be able to avoid this dangerous area.

In a hollow in her tree, Whistledown has hidden two 500-gp topazes; 23 100-gp purple amethysts, blue tourmaline, and red spinel stones on a necklace; and 257 gp. These are the gifts of various lovers over the past few years and the only remnants of the mantrap's victims.

*Look for more SideTreks by J. Bradley Schell in future issues.*

**Our Cheerful Playtesters for This Issue Were:**

Christopher Perkins, Paul Lynds, James Brett, Loren Crass, Leonard Wilson, Ann Wilson, Chris Allen, Katrina Blau, Gael Wilson, and Gary Wilson.

Thanks for your help!

# THE LADY OF THE MISTS

BY PETER ÅBERG

## Follow the haunting music to the island castle.

Artwork by David O. Miller

*Peter writes: "Music plays a big part in 'Lady of the Mists.' It was a piece of music composed by Ennio Morricone for the television series 'Marco Polo' that originally inspired me to write the adventure. I wish there were some way of including this hauntingly beautiful, yet deeply sorrowful music with the module. But it might be a better idea for the DM to choose the music, something that fits the mood and style of the adventure."*

"The Lady of the Mists" is an AD&D® adventure for 4-6 player characters of levels 6-8 (about 36 total levels). A well-balanced group is most desirable and should include a priest of level 6 or higher. The party should have at least one +2 or better magical weapon.

This adventure is designed for players who like mysteries, for those who enjoy having their fright nerves tickled, and for those who just like a good story. There are plenty of opportunities for both role-playing and heroic battles, but the richest rewards await those who use force with moderation. The scenario can be played as a stand-alone adventure or as a part of the DM's campaign. There are several hooks to future scenarios.

The DM should carefully read through the introductions to each section of the adventure. Familiarity with the personalities and motivations of the major NPCs is essential. A copy of MC10, the RAVENLOFT™ appendix to the *Monstrous Compendium,* would also be helpful but is not necessary.

### Introduction

"Spies! Spies! Everywhere, spies!" For more than a decade the citizens of the kingdom of Archstedt lived in terror as the secret police hunted spies, perceived and real, among them. No one was above suspicion. No one was beyond reach of the long arm of the secret police. Untold numbers disappeared, never to be seen or heard from again. An anonymous accusation by a spiteful neighbor, a whispered word of discontent, a lack of displayed enthusiasm at public events, all were enough to send a person to the dungeons for life.

Now, in an unexpected twist of fate, the chief architect of this reign of terror stands accused himself. For years, Althon Edelman was the king's top advisor. As head of the secret police, he was entrusted with maintaining the security and stability of the kingdom. He held absolute con-

trol over the king's ear—the king knew only what Althon wanted him to know. Anyone Althon mistrusted or perceived as a potential rival was soon exposed and eliminated. But then, a few days ago, Althon suddenly disappeared.

The previously timid and subjugated royal council seized the opportunity and soon convinced the king that the man they so despised was defecting. Althon had last been seen heading for the mountainous regions in the north, beyond which lies the rival kingdom of Jaernef. Rather than trusting the discredited secret police to find Althon, a bounty of 10,000 gp was offered for his return, alive, to the capital; half that was offered for his dead body.

The PCs are in Stadoric, the capital of Archstedt, at the time of these tumultuous events. Being foreigners, their movements were closely watched by the secret police until Althon's defection sent the security apparatus reeling. Now the PCs are among the many who have gathered at the main city square to hear the announcement of the bounty put on Althon's head.

As the crowd starts breaking up, the PCs are approached by a man clad in simple, tattered clothes that smell of horse. He presents himself as Hans and shakes the hand of each PC as he exclaims how excited he is to finally meet some real heroes. Then he abruptly becomes more serious, and his voice drops to a whisper as he asks the PCs if they would be interested in some information on exactly where Althon is headed.

Continuing in a whisper, Hans explains that he works at the royal stables, and that four days ago he was there when Althon and two of his men came to take some horses. It was late at night, and there was nobody else around. Hans had stayed only to watch over a newborn foal. Althon and his men were in a hurry and didn't discover him. While the men were saddling their horses, Althon mentioned their destination, which Hans overheard.

Hans says he chose to approach the PCs with his offer since he can see they are foreigners, and hence cannot be members of the secret police. He offers to tell the PCs what he knows for a small fee, as long as they agree not to reveal where they got the information or talk to anyone else about it. Hans makes it clear that the secret police would do anything to get their leader back. Without Althon they are lost and will probably soon be disbanded by the royal council.

If the PCs accept his conditions, Hans describes the quickest route to the village of Avenia, Althon's destination. Avenia lies in the mountainous northern reaches of the kingdom. The ride there normally takes seven days, four or five if the horses are pushed hard. Hans warns the PCs to be careful when dealing with any officials, but adds that ordinary citizens outside the capital can generally be trusted—in fact, most will be outright helpful if the PCs tell them they are hunting Althon.

## For the DUNGEON MASTER™

The PCs are about to witness the conclusion of a centuries-old tale of tragedy and sorrow. It is a tale of friendships broken, of love betrayed, and of years spent in dreadful loneliness. The fleeing Althon is an actor in and a victim of this tale. He left the capital for a very special reason, a reason completely different from anything suspected by the royal council or the king. He is heading for Avenia not because he wants to, but because he has to. He thinks he has no choice if he wishes to live.

The blackened ruins of a once-great castle stand on an island in a vast lake near Avenia. Its broken walls bear witness to days long gone, to magnificence lost, and to the relentless decay of time and death. The castle was originally built more than 400 years ago by a wealthy and beautiful woman of noble birth who sought to escape the hectic life of the distant capital city. She was a kind woman, highly skilled in the arcane arts of magic. She often used her talents in the service of the people living along the shores of the lake and in the village of Avenia. Her true name was Lucilla Germanicus, but among her grateful subjects she became known simply as "the Lady."

Those days are now long gone. The island, once covered with beautiful gardens and lush vegetation, is now a desolate and dangerous place, continuously shrouded in heavy mists and shunned by all. Legends speak of a ghost that haunts the castle ruins, and of other horrible creatures that inhabit the island. Those who have dared set foot on it have returned insane or badly wounded, if at all.

It is to this island that the fleeing Althon is headed. There he hopes to find a certain person he has not seen since a fateful evening a very, very long time ago: Lucilla Germanicus, the Lady of the Mists.

### The Lady of the Mists

Lucilla was unsurpassed in her ability to manufacture magical potions of all sorts. Her specialty was creating healing potions and medicines. As an extension of this desire to heal and understand the workings of the human body, Lucilla's interests eventually turned toward the development of potions that would slow or even halt the natural aging processes. She was motivated partly by self-interest (she wanted to preserve her own body from the ravages of time), but she was also driven by a genuine will to spare mankind from the pain and agony of death and permanent separation from loved ones. After many years of research, and at great expenditure of wealth, she finally managed to produce her crowning achievement, an immortality potion.

This potion would, according to her research, not only halt the aging of the body but also cause it to rapidly recover from almost any wound in a manner similar to the legendary regenerative capabilities of trolls. Severed limbs would reattach themselves if given the opportunity to do so. Even wounds from fire and acid would heal, which is not true for trolls. The only vulnerability seemed to be decapitation. If the head was completely severed from the body, death would result within minutes if the two were not permitted to reattach immediately.

Further research proved that the potion also granted complete immunity to poison and disease. Normal bodily functions were suspended, so that even food, water, air, and sleep became unnecessary. All that was required to achieve these results was a single dose, taken once, and the effects were permanent.

The potion appeared to have one serious side effect, however: infertility. Laboratory mice that were given the potion could no longer reproduce. But Lucilla considered that a small price to pay for immortality.

Lucilla first tried the potion on herself. She carefully noted how it affected her body. Her heart continued to beat, and her skin remained warm and

healthy looking, but she felt very different. It was as if she were being sustained by some force from within her, instead of by energy gained from food and drink, and other things from without. All normal bodily aging had completely stopped. Wounds of any kind were instantly healed. After performing many tests the evidence was conclusive; Lucilla became convinced that she had truly discovered immortality.

After a few years had passed and no additional side effects were apparent, she made several more doses of the potion to distribute to her closest and most trusted friends. Each was required to swear an oath never to reveal the source of their immortality. Lucilla feared she would otherwise be overwhelmed by requests for the potion, which was still too expensive to produce in large quantities.

At first, all was well. Lucilla and her friends formed an informal group, calling themselves (in private) the Immortals. There were 19 of them, including Lucilla. They met regularly at festive occasions such as parties and balls that were often held at Lucilla's castle. Meanwhile, Lucilla continued her research on developing a less-costly version of the potion that could be made available to anyone who desired it.

Trouble was already brewing, however. As the years passed, the effects of the potion became more and more evident to those who had not received it. Whereas they were growing older and losing vigor, Lucilla and her friends were still their youthful selves, seemingly untouched by time. The resentment of those who did not share the good fortune of the Immortals grew even stronger as the members of the group began to distance themselves from common mortals. Old friendships were forgotten and family ties weakened as the Immortals slowly withdrew from association with people outside their own exclusive group.

It was at this time Lucilla chanced to meet the mage Dexter Swartz, a handsome man in his mid-thirties who soon had Lucilla charmed off her feet. Unfortunately, Dexter was by no means sincere when he expressed his love for Lucilla. Originally, his intent was only to make away with a few of her spells and potion recipes. But when Lucilla mentioned the existence of the immortality potion, he immediately shifted the focus of his efforts to acquiring it instead, or at least a dose of it. He was willing to do anything, sacrifice anything or anyone, to get at it.

Lucilla, on the other hand, was truly in love with Dexter and would freely have given him a dose of the immortality potion had it not been for the strong disapproval of her friends. They asked her to wait until she knew him better, for in secret they suspected him of being the scoundrel he really was.

Dexter, however, was not prepared to wait. He came to the next ball at Lucilla's castle to claim what he believed was rightly his. Soon after the first dance of the evening had begun, Dexter unleashed his attack. He summoned a nightmarish creature from the darkest depths of the planes of the Abyss and released it on the crowd. Panic and mayhem erupted as the monstrosity stormed into the ballroom. The majority of the attendants at the ball were mere mortals, the remaining friends and associates of the Immortals. The creature began killing them like flies. Dexter quietly slipped away amid the confusion as Lucilla and her fellow Immortals took up battle with the foul beast.

Unfortunately for Dexter, his control over the being he had summoned was broken by the powerful magic used against it in the struggle. Rather than endure the punishment it was receiving from Lucilla and her associates, the creature decided to seek easier game. It began roaming the halls of the castle, killing whomever it met. Soon it came upon Dexter making his way toward Lucilla's private suite. Lucilla arrived too late to save him from it.

When the battle was finally over and the beast defeated, much of the castle lay in ruins or was burning. With the exception of the Immortals, the guests were all dead. Lucilla's heart was broken. Adding to her grief was the realization that things would only get worse with time. There would be more jealousy, more intrigues, and more fear.

The other Immortals were equally shaken. The first signs of paranoia appeared among them. What if there existed something that could kill them after all? What if someone summoned an even more powerful creature the next time. Could it destroy them? What if there was some magical way to cancel the effects of the potion? What if someone discovered their only vulnerability: decapitation? Suddenly there were many things to worry about.

Lucilla isolated herself in what remained of her castle. Her only companion during the long years ahead would be her pet tiger, Arkhan, to whom she gave the last of the immortality potion. She abandoned her research on making a less-expensive version of the potion. It had proven too difficult, and she no longer had the will to continue the work. The regular meetings of the Immortals ceased. Soon the others drifted apart as tensions and rivalry arose between them, worsened by the constant fear that some spiteful person would eventually find a way to harm them. Over the following decades and centuries, they dispersed over the entire world, seeking the protection of anonymity.

During this time Lucilla, still grieving over the loss of Dexter and the lost company of her friends as well, forged a terrible plan. She decided all that had come to pass was her fault, and it was up to her alone to set matters right again. At the core of the problem was the immortality potion. She had given her friends immortality; now she would have to take it away from them. If she could not give all mankind immortality, it was wrong that a fortunate few should have it.

Lucilla set about researching an antidote to the original potion. She restored her research facilities but was careful to preserve the castle's ruined appearance. Through the use of magic, she shrouded the island in dense mists and populated it with guardians to ward off intruders (in the process giving rise to the legend of the Lady of the Mists). Her work on developing the antidote took more than a decade to complete, but in the end she finally had what she needed for the second phase of her plan to begin.

Over the following centuries, Lucilla sought out her onetime friends wherever they were hiding and gave them, often forcefully, the antidote. Her progress was slow, but one by one she found them. A few had become ambitious and held positions of power and fame. Others were living quiet, reclusive lives, careful not to attract too much attention while enjoying the wealth they had accumulated through the years. All had developed clever schemes to hide their immortality by occasionally "dying." In a matter of hours after receiving the antidote each person quietly died, his or her body aging rapidly in the process.

And so it went, Lucilla finding and killing an old friend once every decade or so, until about 10 years ago when fate struck her one final blow. It was then she noticed that she had suddenly begun to age again. Her body was growing older; the effects of the immortality potion were wearing off. Soon she was a normal mortal in all respects, once again requiring food and rest, no longer invulnerable.

Realizing the same fate would befall the other remaining Immortals, she felt tremendous relief over not having to pursue her quest any further. But she also felt grief over those she had already killed. They too would have begun to age, and eventually would have died naturally if she hadn't interfered. Lucilla once again confined herself to her castle. With Arkhan by her side (the tiger still showed no signs of aging) she decided to await the end.

As the potion failed for the remaining Immortals, a few managed to make their way back to Lucilla's castle in hopes of finding her there and convincing her to save them. But she could do nothing for them. There was no more immortality potion, and she had destroyed all her research on it. Unfortunately, they never believed her. Each encounter ended the same way: Her pleas fell on deaf ears, and after long arguments and many threats, she finally gave them the antidote, pretending it was the immortality potion instead. Fearing for her own life, she had no choice, although it troubled her deeply each time it happened.

Althon Edelman is the last Immortal to come, driven by a vain hope that perhaps he can escape the clutches of death after all, if only Lucilla will help him.

## Avenia

The PCs are two days behind Althon when they reach Avenia. This will always be the case, regardless of how hard the PCs ride their horses (Althon also has good reason to be in a hurry). Neither should they arrive much later than two days after Althon, otherwise Lucilla may no longer be alive. The PCs arrive in the evening, shortly before nightfall.

Avenia is a pleasant farming village with about 20 dwellings. The village is situated by a large, misty lake in an idyllic valley. Towering, tree-clad mountains surround the valley on all sides, providing a degree of isolation from the outside world.

The initial cautiousness of the villagers quickly disappears when the PCs mention the identity of the man they're trying to catch. Althon is a hated man even in areas as remote as this. The villagers are delighted to hear he has fallen from power. Suddenly there is no end to the invitations the PCs receive to share a meal or a roof for the night.

A small crowd gathers as the village elder, a frail old man in his sixties with white, thinning hair and an unkempt beard, introduces himself to you as Nidar Knoblock. Nidar claims that a man fitting Althon's description rode into the village two days ago accompanied by two armor-clad, heavily armed soldiers. The man seemed very nervous and demanded a boat be made available to him and his men come first light the following day.

Nidar continues, "I warned the fellow that the lake's dangerous and that there's nothing but steep mountains on the other side of it anyway. I told him it would be better to ride to the other side of the lake if that's where they wanted to go. A boat wouldn't help unless they wanted to do some fishing, or they wanted to get themselves killed on the Lady's island, hidden out there in the middle of the lake by all the mists.

"But did he listen? No! He gave me a dark glance and had his henchmen threaten to kill us all unless we gave him the boat. So, what could we do? The following day we gave them one of our boats and they set off onto the lake, into the mists. They haven't come back since. The trappers who live on the other side of the lake say there's been no sign of them there, either. They must have stopped on the Lady's island, in which case they're probably dead by now, killed by the curse of the Lady of the Mists. You see, the Lady doesn't like visitors."

Just as Nidar finishes talking, you hear the gentle, almost inaudible sound of a harp playing a sad, longing tune. The music floats across the waters of the lake from somewhere far away deep within the mists. It is eerily beautiful and very emotional. The villagers fall silent, and a few of them quietly begin to weep.

Nidar says in a whisper, "That's the Lady you hear. Sometimes, when the wind is just right, we can hear her music. It's beautiful, but always so sad. I guess she has good reason to cry, though. Legends have it her ghost is doomed to wander the ruins of her castle until the end of time. Apparently, she was killed by her own friends after she had betrayed them in some horrible way. As you may know, ghosts are not to be toyed with; they're dangerous things. That's what I tried to tell this Althon fellow. I suppose his ghost is wandering the halls of the Lady's castle by now."

Nidar falls silent and listens as the music continues. When it fades away, the villagers depart in silence, heading back to their fields and homes. Nidar stays on and asks if there is anything he can do for you.

Nidar suggests the PCs come with him to the village tavern, owned by Nidar and his family, and enjoy something to drink before considering what to do next. Besides, maybe he can offer them some helpful advice. He also mentions that a good friend of his, Hakon, will probably be there, and that he knows a great deal about the Lady of the Mists.

**Nidar:** AL LG; AC 10; MV 12; F1; hp 8; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); S 10, D 8, C 15, I 14, W 14, Ch 17; ML 15.

Nidar commands the absolute trust and loyalty of all the villagers, and uses this trust wisely. He is very vocal and enjoys telling legends and stories from ages past (most of them of his own creation). He is particularly interested in the legend concerning the Lady of the Mists. Nidar is also one of the few people to have visited the Lady's island (in his wild youth) and returned to tell about it. He will gladly share his story with the PCs if given half a chance (see below).

**Hakon:** AL CG; AC 10; MV 12; R2; hp 10; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 9, D 15, C 10, I 14, W 13, Ch 7; ML 13; dagger.

Hakon Alvgard is about 60 years old, has a graying beard, and has lost most of his hair. He is the most artistic of the villagers and is especially proficient at carving wood. Hakon is quiet and tends to keep to himself. His only real friend is Nidar, although his fine wood carvings are appreciated by the entire village. Hakon shares Nidar's interest in the legend of the Lady of the Mists, and

is the source for much of what Nidar knows about the legend.

**Asa:** AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); S 9, D 12, C 10, I 10, W 9, Ch 16; ML 13.

Asa is Nidar's wife. She is 52 years old but doesn't look more than 35. She has short blond hair and a warm smile.

The DM should read or paraphrase the following sections as the PCs talk to Nidar and Hakon to receive important information concerning the Lady's island and the Lady of the Mists.

The Knoblock family's small tavern has a warm, friendly feeling to it. The only people there when you arrive are Asa, Nidar's youthful-looking wife, and a dour, gray old man whom Nidar introduces as Hakon Alvgard. Hakon barely looks up as you are introduced and quickly resumes carving a piece of wood, already recognizable as a warrior wielding a sword. You notice the walls of the tavern are lined with shelves packed with beautiful wood carvings of people, creatures, and objects such as ships and even buildings.

Asa offers you your choice of beverages as you sit down at one of the small tables. Nidar soon joins you.

"Don't mind Hakon; he likes to keep to himself. In our younger days we had a lot of adventures together. Now all he does is carve wooden images of heroes and monsters. He's pretty good at it though. Everything you see on the shelves is his work. Speaking of adventures, I should tell you a bit about the Lady's island in case you're considering going out there.

"To be frank, the island is a bad place: cold, barren, and dangerous. It's always shrouded in mists so thick you can hardly see your hand in front of you. There are monsters and vile creatures everywhere. And then there's the curse. The Lady's curse can turn you to stone if you get too close to her ruined castle. Those who have been there and come back speak of a Garden of Death filled with dead trees and statues of once-living people and animals.

"I've been to the island myself once, although it must be more than 30 years ago now. I went ashore on one of the beaches on the lower, east end of the island and made my way inland. There was a path running up to a few tumbled-down buildings that looked like old warehouses. From there, another path led to the beginning of an elevated walkway that climbs the enormous cliff at the west end of the island. It's on top of that cliff that the castle ruins supposedly stand.

"No sooner had I started up the walkway than music began playing from somewhere high up on the cliff, just like you heard it earlier today. I turned around and ran like a rabbit. I sure didn't want to see what a ghost looked like, even in daylight!

"Well, that's all I know. Usually when I tell this story I'll add a bit about the dragons I had to overcome while fleeing the island, and about the fair maiden I rescued from their clutches [Nidar nods toward his wife]. But now you know only the truth."

Nidar's description of the island refers to the beaches (areas A1 and A2 on the island map), the old warehouses (area B), and the walkway (area D). He is certain the walkway is the only way to reach the castle. "Trying to climb the cliffs would be suicide."

Hakon's wood carvings are of very high quality. A PC with the slightest knowledge of art can easily tell that Hakon could make a comfortable living for himself if he chose to sell his work.

After he finishes talking, Nidar turns to Hakon as if expecting him to say something. Hakon, however, seems lost in his wood carving and appears totally oblivious to what Nidar has been saying. After a while, Nidar turns to the PCs again.

"If you ask me, the only thing on the island that could interest Althon would be the castle ruins. Over the years, we've had a few adventurers come through here headed for the island and the castle. Not too many ever returned. Those that did were in pretty bad shape. Some kept babbling about evil spirits and ghosts—and the curse of course. I really don't know what they hoped to find out there. I mean, what kind of treasure would a ghost bother keeping?"

You hear another voice calmly reply, "Secrets. That's what the Lady of the Mists is guarding. That's her treasure. Secrets so powerful and horrible that she killed her own friends to protect them." The voice is Hakon's. He has stopped his wood carving and is staring straight at you.

If the PCs express an interest in hearing what Hakon has to say, he will tell them what he knows. All of what he says is not exactly correct, but Hakon thinks it is the truth.

"The Lady of the Mists could work some powerful magic in her day. That's what she was, a sorceress. She discovered plenty of dark secrets about the workings of the world. Things mortal men weren't meant to know. That's what brought her downfall. She tried to use those secrets to gain power over others, and to make herself an immortal goddess. Now she's a ghost, doomed to guard those secrets until the end of time.

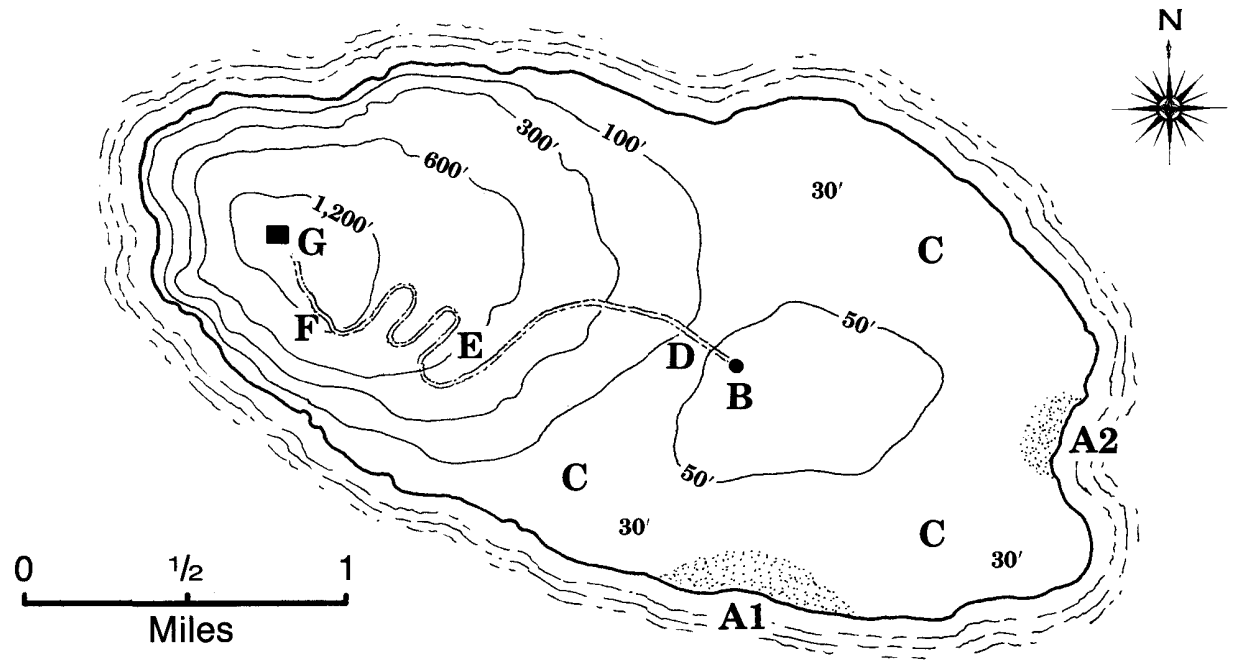
"She wasn't always evil, though. It's said that before darkness corrupted her, she was a good woman who often came to help others in need. She is said to have possessed great healing skills and to have saved many lives using them. I have in my possession three magical potions she once made that prove this. They've been passed down in my family for generations. I always carry them with me."

Hakon shows you a simple wood box holding three small bottles, and with empty spaces for two more. One bottle contains a red fluid, the second a green fluid, and the third a dark blue fluid. Each bottle is engraved with a monogram of the letters "LG."

"Originally there were five bottles in the box, as you can see. Two were used sometime in the past. The red potion cures all forms of disease. The green potion is to heal bad wounds. The dark blue potion is actually a kind of oil that will restore anyone who is struck by the curse—turned to stone that is—if it is smeared all over the stone body."

A *detect magic* spell reveals the contents of Hakon's potion bottles are indeed highly magical. The red fluid is an *elixir of health*. The green fluid is a potion of *extra healing*. The dark blue fluid is an *oil of stone to flesh*. This oily liquid restores a body turned to stone if it is spread all over the petrified body.

## The Lady's Island




A normal system shock check must be made to survive the transformation. The oil has no effect on normal stone (stone not created by magical *petrification*).

Hakon does not know what the monogram on the bottles stands for. Since the PCs are out to capture the despised Althon Edelman, and since Hakon has no children or family to pass the potions on to, he is prepared to trade his potions for something the PCs possess. He would prefer to have an artistically designed magical item or a particularly fine piece of jewelry. He is not interested in money or gold.

After an agreement is reached, Hakon walks over to one of the shelves holding his many wood carvings and takes down an old stone bust depicting the face of a beautiful woman with fine, noble features.

> "This bust is supposed to be more than 300 years old. It shows what the Lady of the Mists looked like when she lived. Pretty, wasn't she? You can have it if you like, as a token of gratitude for going after Althon for us."

### The Voyage to the Lady's Island

Nidar will gladly put a rowboat equipped with a small sail at the PCs' disposal. He informs the PCs that the sail will be useless when they approach the island, because the winds never blow there. Since it takes several hours to reach the island, he suggests the PCs set off early the next morning. Navigating the lake can be very difficult at night, considering the heavy mists covering it. The mists also tend to be lighter during the daytime.

When morning comes, Nidar and Hakon are at the boat to see the PCs off. Nidar greets the PCs with a package containing peculiar-looking goggles for each member of the party. The goggles are made of leather and wood, with a narrow slit over each eye to allow limited vision.

> "These goggles will protect you from one of the worst dangers of the Lady's island: the blood hawks. Those evil birds sometimes come out our way from the island. They're a real nightmare when they attack. I've seen whole flocks of blood hawks swoop down from the sky and tear a man to shreds in minutes. They always go for the eyes first, to stop a man from fighting back. Wearing these goggles, you should stand a better chance."

A person not used to wearing the goggles will suffer −2 to attack rolls while wearing them in combat, but they will greatly reduce the chances of a successful attack on the eyes by blood hawks (from 25% per beak hit to 10%).

As the PCs push off onto the lake under the early morning sun, Nidar gives one final piece of advice:

> "One more thing. Look out for the lake monster! It's kind of a snakelike thing, usually not aggressive unless provoked, but be careful!"

There is no lake monster, but doesn't every lake have its legend about one? The DM may certainly feel free to add a monster, though.

The island lies due north of the village of Avenia. The voyage out to it takes about four hours, using the sail most of the way. The last hour is spent

traveling through the mists, with visibility limited to a maximum of 600′. The PCs cannot see the island until they are within 600′ of its shores.

## The Lady's Island

> Straight ahead, the dark, sheer cliffs of the island rise menacingly out of the calm waters of the lake. The air is perfectly still, yet the mists slowly swirl around you. Not a sound is heard or a creature seen in the strange twilight.

The island consists of sheer cliffs that rise abruptly out of the water to heights of over 100′. The only possible landing places are along the lower sections of the island (areas A1 and A2). The cliffs that border area C are over 30′ high. It might be possible for an enterprising group of PCs to climb these cliffs, but that would mean abandoning their boat. The waters around the island are very deep (over 100′), making it difficult to anchor a boat.

Visibility on the island is limited to 600′ (spotting distance as defined in the *Player's Handbook*, page 117). The high plateau where the castle lies (area G) is over 1,200′ feet above the lake and completely hidden by the mists. The PCs cannot see the castle, or even the full height of the cliff on which it stands, when they first come ashore, regardless of where that is. On the plateau, visibility is a mere 30′; much of the mist and fog is magically produced in the castle.

Vegetation at the lower altitudes of the island (areas B and C) consists of a thick mat of low bushes. There are very few trees; the few that do exist are low, twisted, and gnarly.

Island animal life consists of small rodents and a near-infinite number of rabbits, whose ancestors were brought to the island by Lucilla. The original pair have since multiplied dramatically due to a plentiful food supply and the absence of serious predators (except for the blood hawks). The blood hawks' nests are located in the higher areas (see area E) of the island. They prey primarily on the rabbits but have a preference for human flesh whenever they can find it.

At the higher altitudes of the island (above 300′), the ground becomes increasingly rocky with less and less vegetation covering it. On the castle plateau (area G), the ground is barren except for the skeletal trees and bushes of a long-dead forest.

It will take some time for a flying PC to get an overview of the island, considering the poor visibility. While airborne, the PC will be exposed to attacks by 5-8 blood hawks (40% chance of attack per turn while over areas A-C, 60% per turn elsewhere; see area E).

### Lucilla's Music

During the course of the adventure, Lucilla will play her music occasionally (see areas C and D), even during the night (Lucilla is depressed because she has had to kill Althon). The music can easily be heard anywhere on the island. The tunes she plays are always very slow and very sad (nothing funereal, more of a delicate and longing nature). The organ in the castle (area 40) has the power to emulate any other instrument or sound like an entire orchestra, something Lucilla uses to provide variety and color to her music.

**A1-A2. Beaches.**

> Here the island's facade of sheer cliffs briefly gives way to a stretch of rockstrewn beach. The rotting remnants of a boat dock stick out into the water from the shore, ending in wooden pillars jutting up out of the dark waters. On the beach you see the forms of several boats, all relatively small. Most are mere wrecks, but a few seem better preserved.

The boat used by Althon is at area A1; it looks better than any of the other boats. Some of the boats contain old fishing nets. A trail leads off from each beach, through the bushy vegetation toward the old warehouses (area B).

**B. Old Warehouses.** The warehouses lie on a plateau about 50′ up from the beach.

> Just ahead of you is a cluster of four buildings of various sizes. All seem abandoned and near collapse, some with walls crumbling and roofs caved in. On the path leading up to the buildings lies what appears to be a partially armor-clad human skeleton.

The skeleton is that of one of Althon's bodyguards. He fell victim to the blood hawks. Armor still covers most of the skeleton, but almost all of the flesh is gone from the bones, even underneath the armor. It is easy to see that this unfortunate person has not been dead for long, as the pieces of flesh that remain have hardly begun to rot. Grayish feathers litter the ground around the skeleton.

The old storage houses date from Lucilla's times and are now in very bad shape. If the PCs search through the buildings, they can find various items such as broken pieces of furniture, pottery, fishing nets, etc.

The walkway (area D) begins just beyond the warehouses. It leads out toward the northeast and climbs a steep slope in that direction. A proud stone arch stands over the entrance to the walkway. It is decorated with statues of men and women clad in noble robes. At the highest point of the arch, a shield bears a monogram of the letters "LG." The statues depict Lucilla and her friends (the Immortals). The PCs can easily recognize Lucilla's face on the arch from the bust Hakon gave them. An observant PC may also be able to recognize a face resembling that of Althon on the arch; the general likeness is striking, although some details such as the hair style are different.

**C. Island Plateau.** This level area of the island is covered with a thick mat of bushes of various shapes and sizes (the tallest are about waist high). A few trees are scattered about.

The DM should make an encounter check once every half hour, with a 20% chance for an encounter. Encounters and events in this region of the island include (roll 1d10):

**1-7: rabbits** (2-12), **mice** (2-20), or **rats** (1-10)
**8-9: blood hawks** (3-6; see area E)
**10:** Music from the castle (see "Lucilla's Music").

**D. Elevated Walkway.** The walkway is more than four centuries old, and age has taken its toll. It was built partly of stone, partly of wood; now the masonry is crumbling and the wood rotted.

> The walkway hardly inspires confidence as you begin your journey along it. The wooden boards that once were the walking surface are all but gone, forcing you to step on the thicker beams underneath. Some of these beams seem fairly rotted, too, making every step potentially dan-

gerous unless taken with care. Further ahead, you see that some of the stone support towers that raise the walkway up off the ground have crumbled and partially collapsed, disrupting the walkway's otherwise steady incline.

Although the walkway may look dangerous, it is actually fairly stable as long as the PCs are careful. Maximum safe movement rate is normal *indoor* movement rate (120′ per round for an unencumbered human). At higher movement rates, the DM should require the PCs to make Dexterity checks every round to avoid falling. The average height of the walkway above ground is 10′ near its end sections, 20′ elsewhere. If the PCs climb the cliffs instead of the walkway, consider the cliffs to have a dry, rough surface (mountaineering skill may be required).

Traveling the entire length of the walkway takes almost two hours for a PC with a movement rate of 12 (not counting any time spent on encounters). Climbing the cliffs takes much longer, at least 10 hours.

While the PCs are on the walkway, an encounter check should be made once every turn, with a 10% chance of an encounter. Roll 1d10 for encounters along the walkway and consult the table:

**1-4: blood hawks** (3-6; see area E)
**5-7:** A beam breaks beneath one PC, who must make a saving throw vs. Dexterity to avoid falling (damage depending on height, see above)
**8-9: rabbits**, (2-12) **mice**, (2-20), or **rats** (1-10)
**10:** Music from the castle (see "The Lady's Music"). Use the same encounter table if the PCs try climbing the cliffs, but exchange the breaking beam for crumbling or falling rock, and increase the chance of an encounter to 20% per turn.

**E. Cliffs.** The walkway climbs at a steeper angle along the face of the sheer cliffs at this point. Huddled among the cracks and ledges are a great number of blood hawk nests. The blood hawks do not appreciate intruders who come this close. They attack the PCs in order to drive them back down the walkway again, attempting to cut off one or two PCs from the rest so they can be killed for food.

**Blood hawks** (27): INT semi; AL N; AC 7; MV fly 24 (B); HD 1+1; hp 5 each; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4/1-6; SA +2 to hit and double talon damage when diving, 25% chance to strike eyes on successful beak hit (10% chance if victim is wearing goggles); SZ S; ML 11; XP 120; MC2.

The blood hawks attack in waves of 4-15 (1d12+3) until their numbers are exhausted (or morale fails). The waves are spaced so that when the birds of one wave appear to be failing in combat, another wave sweeps down in a dive attack. The birds waiting to attack circle roughly 100′ above the PCs' location (hawks have excellent vision).

This is a very dangerous encounter due to the large number of blood hawks involved. The hawks focus their attacks on PCs who appear to be weakest, particularly those who are unarmored. They will not break off their attack if the PCs retreat, unless a body (or two) is left behind.

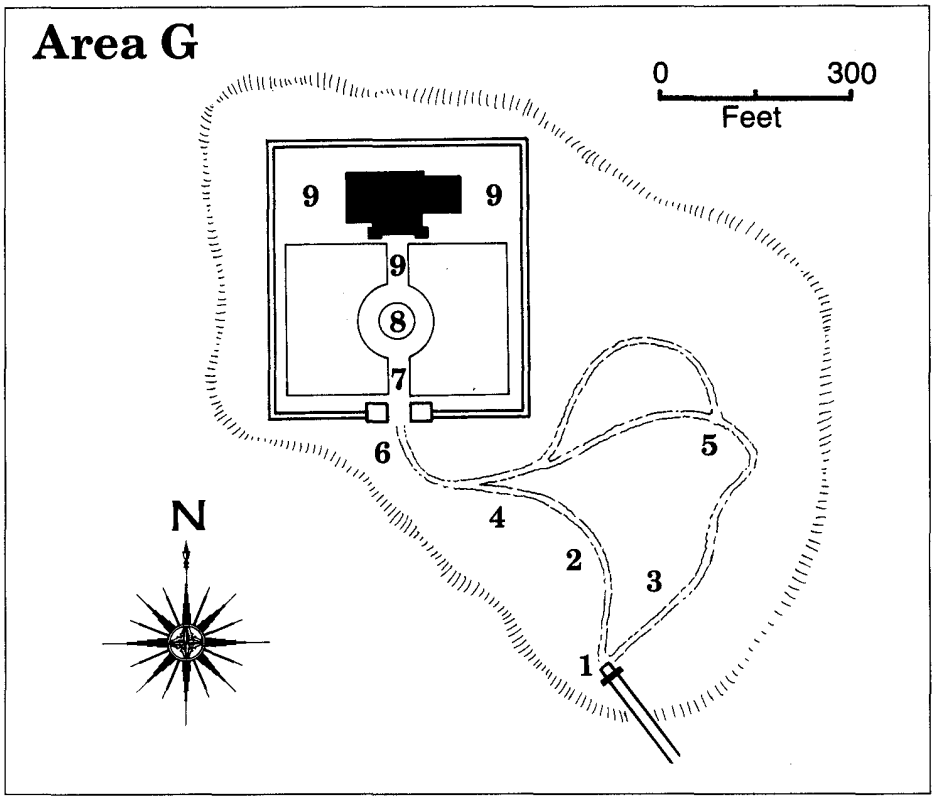
If the PCs retreat but return later, any slain blood hawks will be replaced at a rate of 2-12 per day. These replacements come from other locations on the island. The total island population of blood hawks is approximately 100. If more than 50 blood hawks are lost, however, the rest will flee from the island back to the mainland mountains they originally came from.

**F. Broken Walkway.** The walkway here is very unstable. A 30′-long section will collapse and fall into the lake below just as the first PC steps onto it. The walkway will not give way if simply tapped with a long pole, or if objects are thrown onto it to test its strength. It requires the full weight of a person to cause the stone supports to fail.

As you continue your ascent, the walkway turns so you're following the outer perimeter of the cliff. Far below, the wall of stone onto which the walkway clings slopes steeply down to the lake. Above, the cliff face continues as high as you can see (about 300′).

Suddenly, as [the first PC] takes [his/her] next step, a ghastly rumbling sound comes from below as a large section of the walkway slips away from the cliff face and plunges down toward the water below.

The section of walkway that collapses stretches 5′ back from where the first PC is standing, and 25′ forward from his location. Anyone standing on the




collapsed section must make a Dexterity check to grab something stable. Those who fall (including the PC who caused the collapse) suffer 1-10 hp damage tumbling down the cliff, and are caught on the remains of the stone supports for the walkway.

It is possible to traverse the collapsed section by carefully walking along a very narrow ledge close to the cliff. This requires a successful climbing check, adjusted for factors such as the type of armor worn, rope use, etc. (See *PH*, pages 122-123).

**G. High Plateau.** The top of the cliff on which the castle stands is a vast, rockstrewn plateau covered with a forest of dead trees (remnants of a once-beautiful garden). Visibility on the plateau is limited to 30′.

As soon as the PCs set foot on the plateau, they are discovered by a mist horror. This creature takes some time to assume a suitable attack form, following the PCs about at a safe distance as long as they remain in the mists. The form it selects is based on the fears of its potential victims. For the sake of this adventure, it assumes the form of the ghost of the Lady. The mist horror attacks when the PCs first glimpse the castle (see area G9). A PC who can *detect evil* may discover a vague evil not traceable to any particular location (until the mist horror has assumed its attack form).

The wall surrounding the castle courtyard is 10′ high. Although crumbling in places, it is largely intact.

**G1. The Statue.**

> The walkway finally levels out as it reaches the top of the cliff you've been scaling. Ahead lies a dismal, rockstrewn plateau covered with a forest of dead trees, only their blackened, skeletal trunks and branches remaining. Heavy mists swirl through the desolate landscape, giving it an eerie feeling and limiting visibility to a mere 30′. The walkway ends under a partially collapsed arch decorated with a monogram of the letters "LG." A path leads off from the arch, but it soon branches in two different directions. At the fork, you can see a toppled statue lying on the ground.

The statue is of an elderly man clad in rich robes. His face seems twisted in an expression of shock and agony, and he holds his hands as if warding off something in front of him. There is no base for the statue.

This man was turned to stone by the basilisk that roams the plateau (see areas G4-G5). If the PCs attempt to restore the man to life by means of a spell or Hakon's *oil of stone to flesh*, the body will turn back to flesh but it will die in a few seconds, aging rapidly in the process. The man was one of the Immortals who had begun to age again. He never reached the castle before encountering the basilisk, a guardian brought here by Lucilla.

Both paths lead through the dead forest to the castle. Regardless of which path they choose, the PCs will meet the basilisk roaming the plateau before they reach the walls of the castle courtyard. This encounter takes place soon after they have seen a second group of stone statues (areas G4 and G5).

Movement rates through the foggy, dead forest are equivalent to indoor movement.

**G2. Statue of an Elven Maiden and a Unicorn.** This arrangement was probably inspired by the popular novel *The Elven Maiden and the Unicorn* (see area 37 in the castle).

> As the path makes a bend, you see the statues of a beautiful elven maiden and a unicorn standing close to the edge of what appears to be a small pool filled with muddy, foul-smelling water.

These are real statues; they were never alive. The water in the pool is definitely not drinkable.

**G3. Centaur Statue.**

> To the side of the path you see the statue of a centaur, bow in hand aiming at some unseen target.

This is a normal statue.

**G4-G5. Groups of Statues.** This is the basilisk's favorite area to lie in wait for prey. It usually hopes to catch a rabbit or two, but today it has a chance at bigger game.

Just ahead is a strange sight. An entire group of stone statues seems to have been gathered together in one small area. Some of the statues are in pieces, the various body parts strewn on the ground. Others still stand, some leaning against each other. In all, there appears to be more than a dozen statues. They include representations of humans, an elf, and two dogs.

These statues have all been created by the basilisk, which attacks the PCs soon after they enter this area.

**Basilisk, lesser:** INT animal; AL N; AC 4; MV 6; HD 6+1; hp 28; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-10; SA gaze turns to stone; SZ M; ML 12; XP 975; MC2.

Opponents fighting the basilisk and seeking to avoid its gaze suffer a −4 penalty to attack rolls.

The petrified people in each of these groups are all adventurers who have come here over the years seeking fame and fortune. These unlucky people had the misfortune of encountering the basilisk before reaching the castle.

**G6. Courtyard Gates.**

The path leads up to a pair of tall, badly rusted iron gates set in a 10′-high stone wall. The gates are slightly ajar. On the ground in front of them lies yet another stone statue, this one of a man wearing armor, with a sword in his right hand and a shield strapped to his left arm. On the other side of the gates you can see a shield on the ground. The emblem on it is unmistakably the insignia of the royal police of Archstedt (also used by the secret police).

The same insignia can be found on the statue's shield. The statue was Althon's second bodyguard. If this man is restored to life, he will still be loyal to Althon and refuse to cooperate with the PCs. He has absolutely no idea why Althon wanted to come to this place.

**G7-G9. Castle Courtyard and Garden.** The area within the courtyard walls is a gloomy and dismal place covered with an abundance of leafless trees and shrubs. The following general description should be read when the PCs first enter the courtyard (regardless of how they come in).

Through the thick fog you can barely make out the skeletal features of dead trees and shrubs that fill the withered garden. The air is chilly and damp, and there is a dark feeling of lurking evil.

Suddenly you hear music from somewhere ahead. It is a gentle, slow tune that is soon accompanied by a soothing woman's voice.

*High up here on the misty mountain*
*Behind these lonely walls of stone*
*I am waiting*
*And remembering*
*Seeing something from long ago.*
*Haunting voices echo through the halls*
*Familiar faces smile and then are gone*
*And I am waiting*
*And remembering*
*Seeing spirits of long ago.*
*Gone are the days of light and laughter*
*Of joyous love and sweet desire*
*And I am waiting*
*And remembering*
*Seeing everything from long ago.*

As the song ends, silence once again falls over the eerie garden. The mists continue to swirl slowly around you, and the feeling of dread returns.

The same winds that carry the Lady's music can sometimes carry her song too, though seldom as far.

**G7. Garden Path.**

A path leads off from the gates through the dense thicket of dead bushes and shrubs ahead. Hacked-off branches litter the ground, though it's hard to tell how recently they were cut.

A ranger might be able to tell that someone passed this way very recently (a day or two ago). Movement through the thick brush to the sides of the path is considerably slower than walking on the path (maximum 10′ per round, equivalent to an indoor movement rate of 1, off the path).

**G8. Fountain.** When the PCs reach the fountain, they are attacked by huge spiders.

The path leads into a clearing around a large garden fountain decorated with statues of dolphins surrounded by angel-like figures, some of them riding the dolphins.

The huge spiders lurking in the bushes leap out suddenly (up to 30′) and attempt to gain surprise. Anyone they manage to catch (and knock out with their poison) is dragged off to the conservatory (area 8).

**Spiders, huge** (5): INT animal; AL N; AC 6; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 15, 14, 11 (×2), 6; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA poison type A (Dmg 15/0), +1 on save, leap up to 30′ gives opponents −6 on surprise roll; SZ M; ML 8; XP 270; MC1.

These spiders nest in the castle (area 8) and have no treasure in the courtyard.

**G9. Castle View.** The PCs catch their first glimpse of the castle when they reach this point. The mist horror (see area G) that has been following them attacks here.

The dark outline of a towering, massive structure suddenly appears out of the mists ahead. The castle appears badly ruined. There are gaping holes in the walls, and rubble lies strewn on the ground all around. The plaster on the outside walls is crumbling, and large patches of it are blackened as if by soot from a fire. Only empty holes remain where windows once covered the openings.

The dense fog obscures the castle's exact size, allowing you only a hint of its proportions. The walls disappear into the fog at a height of around 30′, but is probably much higher than that. On the ground, it appears to cover an area of at least 100′ × 50′, probably more.

The doors at the entrance to the castle are wide open, revealing a dark interior.

The mist horror has taken the form of the ghost of the Lady. It pounces out of the mists onto the person closest to the castle.

**Mist horror:** INT low; AL NE; AC 2; MV 15; HD 5; hp 22; THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 2-12/2-12; SA telempathic; takes the shape of something feared by the victims; combat form leaps out of the mists to gain surprise (−2 on opponent's surprise roll); SD immune to all attacks

unless in combat form; +2 or better weapon to hit; 50% magic resistance within 20′ radius, applies to spells from spell-casters only (not spells from items or devices); immune to spells vs. undead; can dissolve its combat form instantly (and thereby become immune to all attacks); SZ varies; ML 12; XP 3,000; MC10. Turned as "special" creatures by priests and paladins.

The mist horror will return to its noncombat form if it is too badly wounded. It takes 1-4 turns for it to build a new combat form.

## The Lady's Castle

Only the core of the castle survives relatively intact. The outer walls are partially collapsed, and portions of the roofs have caved in. Fire has destroyed most of the bottom two floors.

The outer dimensions of the castle are 135′ × 75′. The height of the tallest tower (Lucilla's tower) is 120′. The indoor ceiling height is 20′ unless otherwise noted. There is not much mist inside the castle, though some lingers in sections that have large openings to the outside, such as the ballroom (area 4) and the conservatory (area 8).

The PCs cannot see the full height of the castle due to the mists. The existence of Lucilla's tower is not evident at all from the ground. If the PCs decide to climb the outside of the castle, they will be attacked by the spiders from area 8 (which are always looking for food).

### Ground Floor

The ground floor was badly damaged by the fire that swept through the castle during the battle between Dexter's summoned monster and the Immortals. In some places (areas 1-4), the ceiling has collapsed, filling those areas with piles of debris from the floor above.

**1. Entrance.**

> The remains of two tall iron doors hang precariously from their hinges at the entrance to the castle. The metal has rusted through completely, leaving a brittle substance that seems ready to crumble at the slightest touch. A hallway is visible behind the doors. Its walls are blackened, as if by fire, although patches of a mural can be made out here and there. The arched ceiling above has partially collapsed, covering the floor with debris. Further down the hallway, two bronze doors that have turned green with corrosion over the centuries lean against the walls. A smaller, wooden door fills an opening in the west wall.
>
> As you're carefully observing the surroundings, you suddenly hear faint laughter coming from somewhere ahead, inside the castle.

The door to area 2 is stuck in its frame. To open it, the PCs must break through it using an ax or ram; this requires a successful Strength check. The laughter comes from the ballroom (area 4).

**2. Storage Room.**

> The floor of this large room is covered with a thick layer of debris, the remains of the collapsed ceiling and stories above. A gaping hole now opens upward, exposing the entire room to the dim daylight outside.

This room was once held outdoor clothing, garden tools, extra furniture, etc. The door to area 1 is stuck. There is no glass in the window on the west wall. The opening in the south wall is only a small part of the damage done to the front of the castle. Little remains of this section of the castle on the two upper floors. The bricks, thick timbers, and other debris in the room bear the marks of fire and heat.

**3. Hall.** The ceiling of the hall now lies mostly on the floor. The grand staircase leading up to the second floor is covered with debris.

> As you proceed further into the castle, you become even more aware of how badly ruined it is. The hall you are standing in is dominated by a grand staircase in white marble leading up to the second floor. It is covered with heavy beams and other debris that have fallen from the ceiling, which is almost totally gone. The walls of the second story are visible through the hole above. Only a narrow portion of the ceiling remains along the east wall. The floor of the hall is also littered with debris.
>
> There are several doors in the hall, all bronze and all corroded green. From behind the partially open doors to the west you hear voices laughing and talking, although it's impossible to make out what they're saying. From behind the doors to the east you hear more people talking and the typical sounds of a dinner feast (glasses clinking, knives and forks on plates, etc.).

In both cases the sounds are *flashbacks* (see areas 4, 5, and 6). If the PCs search through the rubble, they find nothing of interest except rusted pieces from the suits of armor that once stood in the great hall above (area 11).

**4. Ballroom.** The ceiling here is twice the normal height (40′).

When the PCs first look into this room (from any direction), read or paraphrase the following to the players:

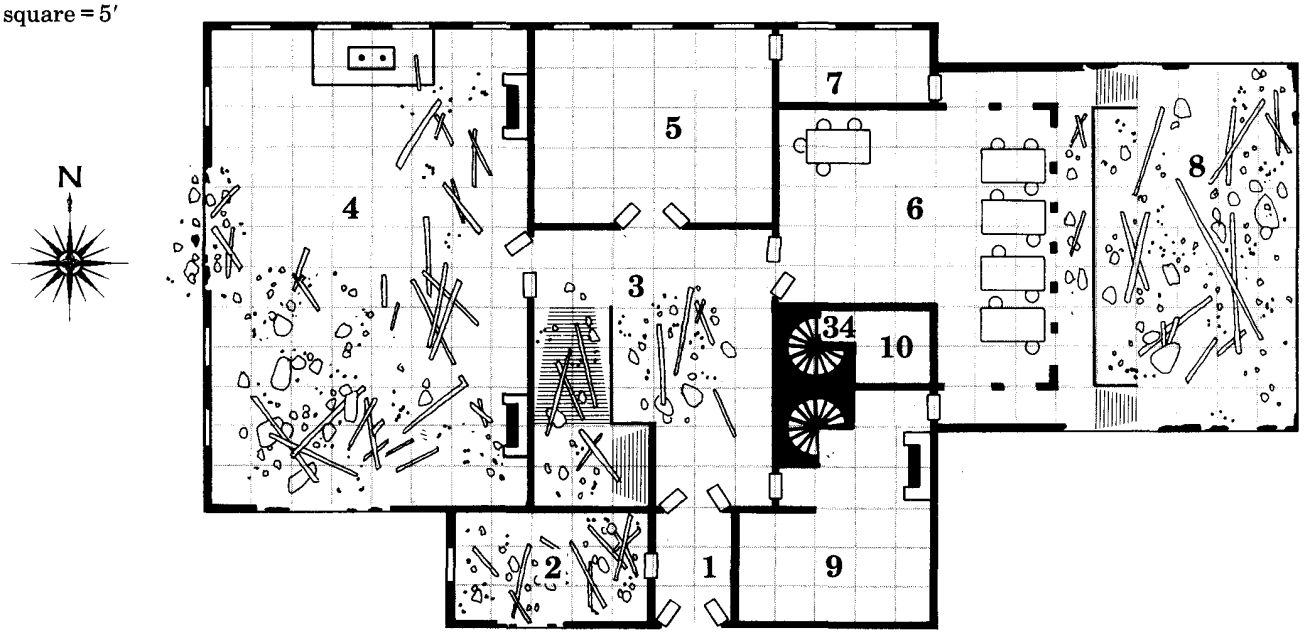
> An amazing sight meets your eyes as you look into this grand room. Music fills the air as a crowd of elegantly dressed people swirl in a delightful dance over the polished stone floor. The room is brilliantly lit by numerous crystal chandeliers hanging from the high ceiling. The walls are white with golden borders and intricate decorations.
>
> At the far northern end of the room, a golden throne is set on a dais covered with red velvet. The wall behind the throne is hung with a beautiful tapestry bearing a monogram "LG." You notice how those not dancing stop and kneel toward the throne whenever they pass by, even though the throne is currently empty. A few even seem to speak to some unseen person sitting on it.
>
> Suddenly the dancing stops and everyone turns toward the doors. Faces twist in fear and panic. Voices rise in horror. The music stops and the screams grow stronger as everyone scrambles to get away from the doors. Then, in an instant, everything is quiet and everything has changed.

If the PCs visit this room again, read or paraphrase the following to the players. This is what the room really looks like.

> You're looking into a large hall with piles of debris covering most of the floor. In the south end it appears as if a tower that once stood on the roof of the hall has plunged down to the floor, leaving a huge hole in the

# The Lady's Castle
## Ground Floor

1 square = 5′




ceiling. The walls are all blackened by soot, the windows are shattered, and only barely recognizable twisted frameworks remain of the chandeliers that hang from above. A balcony that once ran along the east wall has fallen down, leaving a pile of rotted timbers below. Heavy mists sweep in through gaping holes in the south and west walls.

There appears to be a small shrine on a dais against the north wall. There is an altar covered with an embroidered altar cloth supports a small, gold-colored bowl.

The images and sounds the PCs first experienced were part of one of the several *flashbacks* that haunt the castle (similar to the *phantom shifts* caused by poltergeists, except *flashbacks* cannot be interacted with). These *flashbacks* show events that occurred on that fateful evening so many years ago when Dexter let loose his summoned creature in the castle (see "For the Dungeon Master"). The person sitting on the throne at the time of the disaster was Lucilla. Her image was not "caught," since she survived the ordeal.

If the PCs search the hall, they will find nothing left of either the victims or the throne. The altar is surrounded by a hemispherical *force field* (its diameter is 3′, tightly enclosing the altar, leaving no space to *dimension door* or *teleport* into). The altar consists of one of the stone blocks from the collapsed stone tower. There are still visible traces of mortar on it. The altar cloth is finely embroidered with scenes depicting a tall, dark-haired woman tending to sick and wounded people. She is also shown handing out small bottles to others. A later scene shows how a man wounded by a bear is able to instantly rise to his feet again and defeat the bear after drinking the contents of such a bottle. The bowl is made of gold and is engraved with the words "In Honor of Our Lady." It contains what appears to be dried flowers (an offering). Its value is roughly 50 gp.

The altar was erected by the villagers of Avenia in honor of Lucilla shortly after the disaster at the ball (around 300 years ago). Lucilla withdrew from contact with the villagers at that time and it was widely believed that she had died. The rumor that Lucilla had turned into a ghost arose when the *flashbacks* started in the castle. (The first *flashbacks* occurred on the anniversary of the fateful evening. After that, they happened more and more frequently, until now they occur up to several times a day.) Soon the villagers stopped coming to the island. Lucilla and the shrine were eventually forgotten, replaced by the legend of the Lady of the Mists.

Lucilla later protected the altar by means of a permanent *force field.* For her it symbolizes a cherished memory of happier days long past.

**5. Library.** The library was completely destroyed in the fire, but on first entering the PCs see a *flashback* of things as they once were.

Somehow, this room seems to have survived the destruction of the rest of the castle. The walls are lined with bookcases filled with books of all sizes. In the center of the room are a few neatly arranged groups of tables and comfortable armchairs. Moonlight beams in through the tall windows in the north wall.

Suddenly, a man's head appears over the back of one of the chairs facing the windows. He jumps out of it and is quickly followed by a woman from the same chair. Both are clad in expensive and elegant clothing. They stand frozen, staring in your direction. Then they begin backing off, their faces twisting in fear. The woman begins to scream. And then they are gone.

The man and women in the chair were seeking privacy in the library when Dexter's creature found them. See area 4 for further details on the *flashbacks*.

This is what the room really looks like:

Only a burned-out shell remains of this room. Gaping holes in the north wall are all that remain of the windows. The walls are blackened by fire and soot. Piles of rubbish cover the floor. The bronze door leading east appears to have partially melted.

**6. Dining Room.** The *flashbacks* in the dining room are purely auditory.

This large room appears to have been a dining room. The east wall consists of a series of graceful archways opening onto another room beyond. Five long wooden tables appear to be remarkably well preserved. The luster is gone from their once-polished surfaces, but the dark wood appears unaffected by age and time. Chairs that probably once stood around the tables haven't fared as well, and many are badly rotted and lie scattered about the floor in pieces. The floral patterns of murals on the walls are another sign this area was largely spared the fire that seems to have swept through other parts of the ground floor of the castle.

Strangely enough, although your eyes tell you there is no one in the room, you plainly hear sounds of conversation and laughter coming from the tables. Someone calls for more wine; a servant answers. A woman breaks out in laughter. Two men seem to be having an argument over the quality of the fish being served.

The sounds waver in strength, and fade to a nearly inaudible level a few rounds after the PCs first look into the room. The sounds return and then fade again in 30 minute intervals. There is nothing magical about the sounds; they are simply part of the *flashback* (see area 4). The wood in the tables is very dense and massive, making this furniture extremely resistant to moisture and rot.

**7. Gallery.**

Placed against the north wall in this otherwise gutted room is the large and very impressive marble statue of a muscular man struggling with a huge viper. The details of the artwork are incredibly well done. The statue seems almost alive.

This is a real statue, probably worth a fortune at an art auction. Unfortunately it weighs around 2,000 lbs.

**8. Conservatory.**

This area was evidently once a conservatory. Much of the roof and the outer walls have collapsed, covering the floor with rubble. Dead tree trunks stick up between the snapped beams and sections of roofing.

A colony of eight **huge spiders** (hp 15, 14, 11 (×2), 9, 8 (×2), 6; see area G8 for complete statistics) lurks among the debris. These are relatives of the spiders that attacked the PCs in the garden outside the castle. There are several noncombatant young crawling about the area.

The spiders attack any intruders, pouncing from a distance if possible. The remains of the spiders' former victims lie scattered about in the rubble. Among the remains is a *dagger +2*, a potion of *extra healing*, 134 gp, and 77 sp. The coins date back roughly 100 years.

**9. Kitchen.**

The castle kitchen is in total ruins. Pots and pans, jars and china lie strewn about the floor, dented or in pieces. A badly rusted iron cauldron still hangs in the large fireplace, but the bottom of it has rusted through completely. A dark spiral staircase leads both upward to the second floor and down into the cellar.

The cellar below the kitchen consists of one large storage room (30′ × 60′). It is full of remnants of crates and barrels that once held foodstuffs, but has nothing of interest for the PCs.

**10. Fog Room.** In the center of this small room, a large vat containing a magical liquid emits tremendous amounts of foglike vapors. The fog is as thick as that produced by the spell *solid fog* (visibility 2′, movement 1′ per round, see area 34 for further details) throughout the room and the adjacent staircase. A large glass bottle labeled "Neutralizer" stands beside the vat. The bottle contains a substance that will permanently neutralize the liquid in the vat and stop the vapors.

Before she put the "fog generator" here, Lucilla used this room as a destination/origin for *dimension door* spells.

### Second Floor

The ballroom balcony and the great hall, as well as portions of the southern areas of this floor were destroyed in the fire.

**11. Great Hall.** This was where Lucilla held her meetings and consultations with the Immortals. Some traces of the furniture still remain.

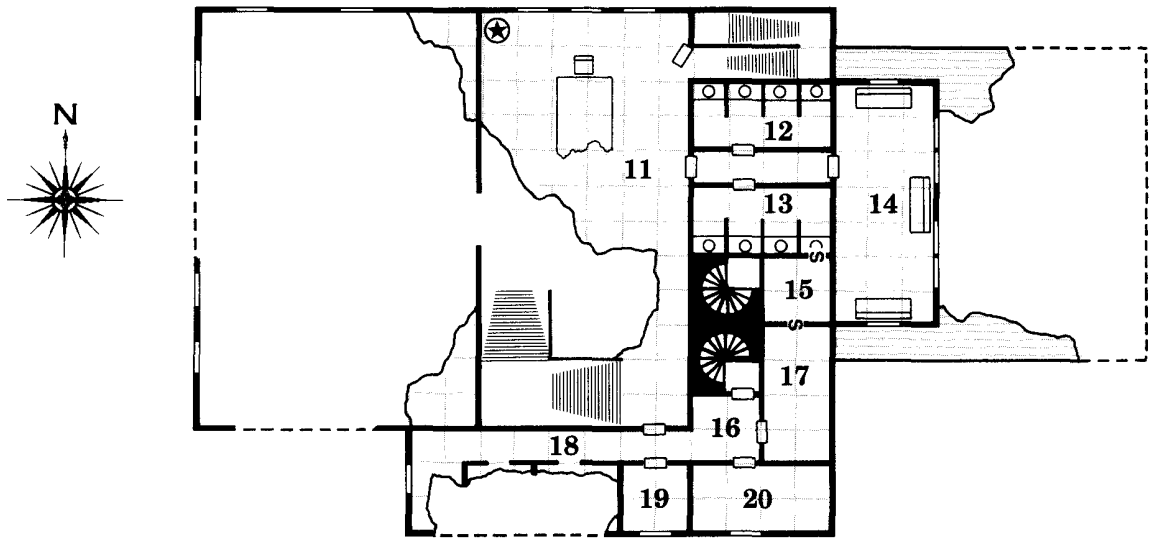
The grand staircase leads up from the ground floor to a great hall. Much of the floor of the hall has collapsed, and fire has ravaged its contents. Part of a long wooden table lies on the floor in the northern end of the hall. The table ends in a burned-off stub at the edge of the hole down to the floor below. Smaller piles of rotted wood that probably were chairs lie around the table. Several intact crystal chandeliers hang from the ceiling above. Along the blackened walls stand rusty suits of armor, some missing pieces that now lie on the floor in front of them. In the northwest corner is an imposing—albeit headless—statue in white marble of a woman clad in flowing robes, holding a flask in her left hand and a scroll in her right.

As you stand looking into the hall, you suddenly hear a voice. It starts off as a whisper but grows in intensity as more and more voices join in. It's difficult to make out all of what the voices are saying, but you can hear certain phrases repeated over and over again: "Who are they? What are they doing here? What do they want?" The chorus rapidly grows louder and louder until the noise is almost deafening.

The voices are those of a multitude of invisible poltergeists. These pesky

# The Lady's Castle
## Second Floor

1 square = 5'




spirits follow the PCs around as long as they remain in the castle. They do whatever they can to make life miserable for the PCs, such as throwing things at them (starting with whatever pieces of rubble they can find in this hall), chattering continuously, banging on doors and walls, knocking small items out of their hands, etc. All of the poltergeists are bound to the castle (they were participants in the festivities of that fateful evening a long time ago). They cannot be communicated with, despite their repeated questions.

**Poltergeists** (24): INT low; AL LE; AC 10; MV 6; HD ½; hp 3 each; THAC0 15 (attack as 5-HD monsters); #AT 1; Dmg nil; SA fear if hit by thrown object; SD *invisibility*, silver or magical weapon to hit; SZ M; ML 10; XP 65; MC2. The poltergeists are turned as ghouls. They will not leave the castle.

Only 1-8 poltergeists attack (by throwing objects) each round. The remainder irritate the PCs as mentioned above.

The name "Lucilla Germanicus" is engraved on the base of the statue. The head is nowhere to be found (it was struck off by Dexter's monster and was later taken by Lucilla to her bedroom, area 39).

The stone stairway in the northeast corner is completely intact and leads up to area 21 on the floor above.

**12. Men's Toilet.**

> This appears to have been a bathroom. Along the north wall, a long marble bench has holes cut into it at regular intervals. There are dividing walls between the holes.

Before disaster hit the castle, water ran under the bench to flush it out.

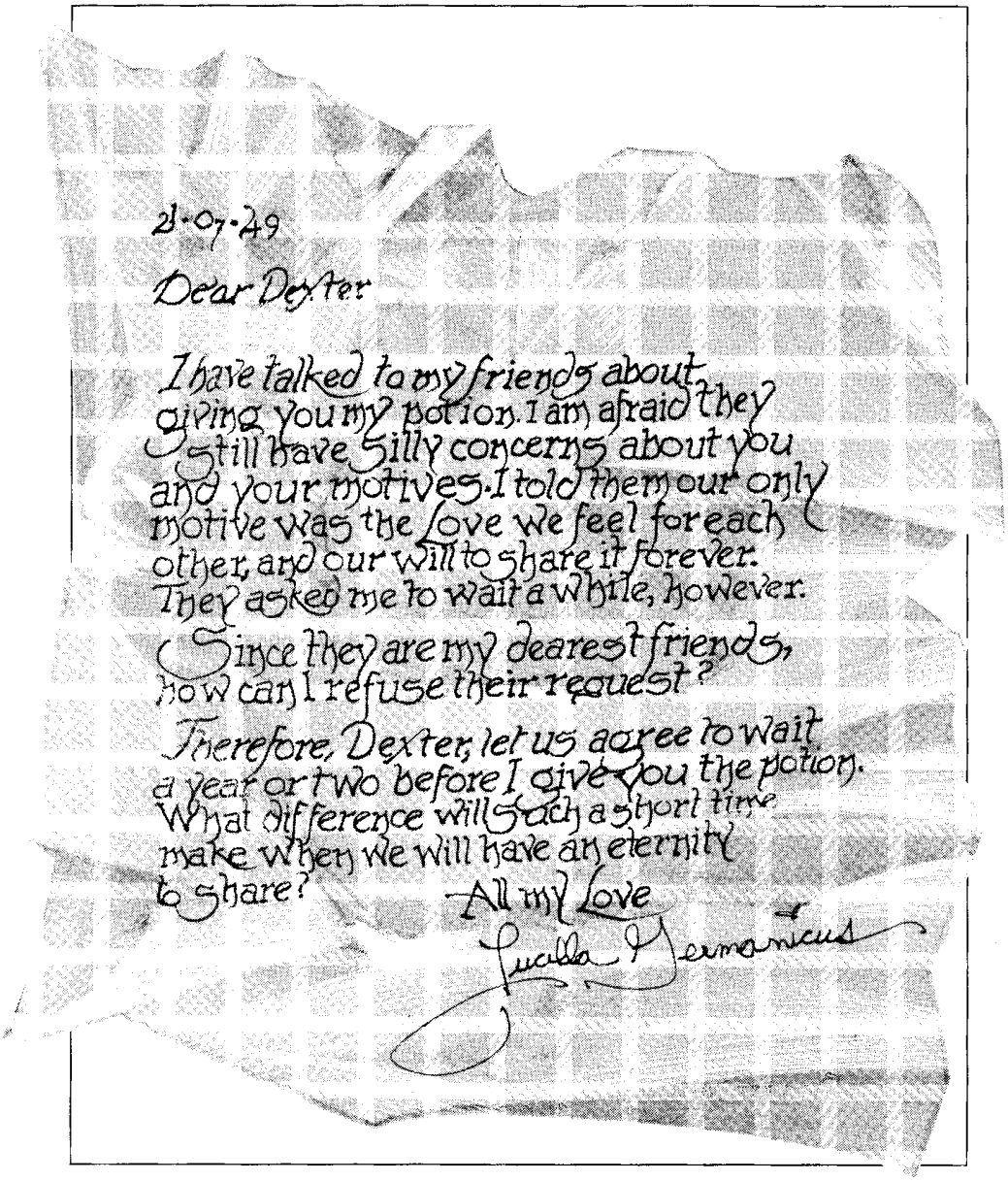
**13. Ladies' Toilet.** The door to this room is stuck and requires a successful open-doors check as if it were barred. This room looks identical to area 12, but there is a secret door is in the back of the stall farthest to the east. The door opens in the wall above the bench (a bit awkward, but it was for emergency use only).

**14. Drawing Room.** The windows here still have glass in them.

> The unusually large windows in the east wall of this room give it a bright and airy feeling. The room and its contents seem entirely intact, though covered by a thick layer of dust. The walls are painted with soothing outdoor landscapes. Several low couches are arranged around equally low tables. Against the west wall stand two tall cupboards with their glass doors flung open. On the floor in front of them lie piles of broken glass bottles. The cupboards still seem to contain a bottle or two, and an assortment of drinking glasses.

The two remaining bottles contain 300-year-old cognac. Both are in perfect shape. They would easily fetch 1,000 gp at an auction (of course, once a bottle has been opened, its contents will soon go bad). The broken bottles on the floor were all thrown there by a distraught ex-Immortal who had returned to the castle in search of more of Lucilla's potion.

**15. Secret Room.** This room is empty. Lucilla used it as both destination and origin for *dimension door* spells.



21-07-49

Dear Dexter

I have talked to my friends about giving you my potion. I am afraid they still have silly concerns about you and your motives. I told them our only motive was the love we feel for each other, and our will to share it forever. They asked me to wait a while, however. Since they are my dearest friends, how can I refuse their request?

Therefore, Dexter, let us agree to wait a year or two before I give you the potion. What difference will such a short time make when we will have an eternity to share?

All my Love

Lucilla Nemanicus

**16. Corridor.**

The ceiling along the south wall of this corridor has collapsed, depositing piles of debris on the floor and exposing the corridor to the outside. Through the large opening above you can see the crumbling walls of the next floor.

**17. Storage Room.**

There are no windows in this dark room. Half-collapsed wooden closets and cupboards line the walls of the room, much of their contents now thrown in unrecognizable, rotting piles on the floor.

The closets once held linens, tablecloths, servant clothing, etc. There is a secret door to area 15 in the back of one of the closets.

**18. Corridor.**

The corridor here is open to the outside through the collapsed outer wall of the castle and the missing ceiling above. Debris covers the floor, which creaks ominously when stepped on. The walls and remaining portions of ceiling and floor are all blackened by fire and soot.

If anyone enters this corridor, the floor has a 50% chance per round of collapsing, depositing the unfortunate person on the ground floor 20′ below and causing 2-12 hp damage in the process.

**19. Debris Room.** The door into this room is blocked by the debris that almost completely fills it. Opening it requires a successful check as if it were barred. The debris comes from the collapsed ceiling and floor above. The floor of this room is as unstable as that of area 18.

**20. Dormitory.** The door is blocked by debris (see area 19).

The west portion of this room is filled with debris and rubble from the collapsed ceiling above. Behind the rubble, in the east end of the room, some of the original furniture has survived relatively intact. Three triple-deck bunk beds and a narrow closet stand along the walls in that section.

This was the servants' living quarters. Nothing of interest remains. The ceiling in the room has partially collapsed.

### Third Floor

The third floor was the guests' quarters. Lucilla's immortal friends could live in comfort in the once luxuriously appointed suites. Evil creatures now lurk in a few of the darker rooms, spirits of those who died horribly at the hands of Dexter's creature.

**21-23. Corridors.** Lucilla used her magical skills to create a *programmed illusion* to meet the PCs wherever they first appear in these corridors. The illusion has a message for the PCs.

As you enter the corridor, you are startled to see a woman standing nearby, gazing in your direction as if waiting for someone. She is dressed in a fine white gown and wears a golden circlet on her head. Her long hair is black, with strands of gray here and there. Her eyes are a very dark brown.

To your amazement the woman suddenly begins to speak in a stern voice.

"I am Lucilla Germanicus, the lady of the castle. I do not know why you have come, but I advise you to turn back and leave this place. Only ghosts and creatures of the past live here, and there is no treasure of worth for you to find. Go! before the evil of this sad place destroys you as well. And be glad you may still leave."

That said, the woman disappears into thin air.

This was Lucilla's first and only warning to the PCs. After the image has disappeared, read the appropriate description below.

If the PCs are in area 21:

As soon as the woman is gone, the rusted suits of armor lining the walls of this broad corridor suddenly begin moving toward you, readying their weapons to strike.

If the PCs are in area 22:

As soon as the woman is gone, you hear the clanking sound of metal as several suits of armor from the north end of this broad corridor start coming toward you, weapons in hand.

If the PCs are in area 23:

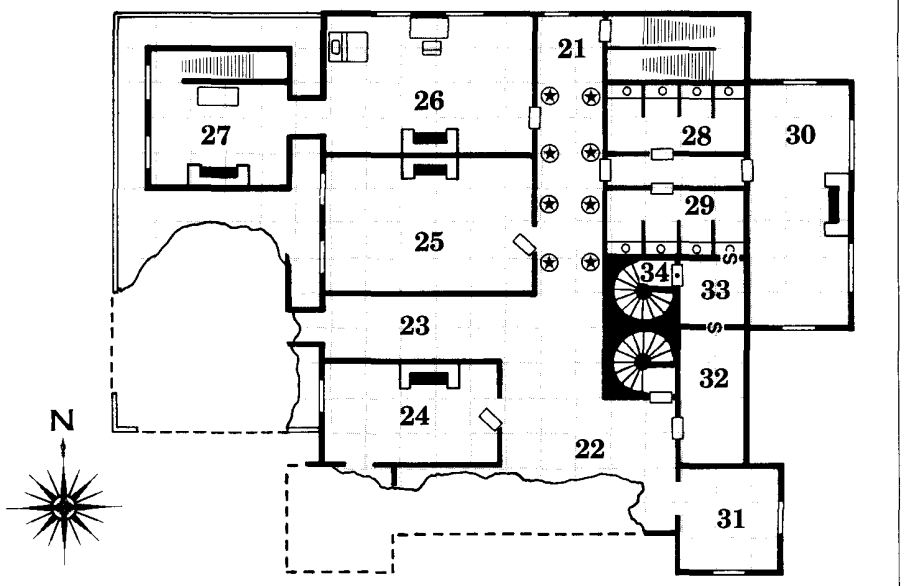
As soon as the woman is gone, you hear the clanking sound of metal from somewhere down the corridor. The sound grows louder, and then you see several suits of armor turn the corner from the north. They are walking toward you with weapons ready to strike.

**Doom guards** (8): INT low; AL N; AC 2; MV 9; HD 5; hp 26, 25 (×2), 24, 21 (×3), 17; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8 (by weapon type); SD immune to mind-affecting spells; heat- and cold-based attacks inflict half or no damage; SZ M; ML 20; XP 2,000; MC10. Doom guards are not undead and cannot be turned. All are armed with long swords.

The doom guards fight until they either kill the PCs or force them to leave the castle. They will not pursue the PCs outside the castle.

# The Lady's Castle
## Third Floor

1 square = 5′




**24-25. Ruined Suites.** The furnishings of these two suites have been totally ruined over the years. Only rotting piles of wood and cloth remain.

**26. Dexter's Suite.**

Some of the furniture in this large, dark room is still recognizable. A broad canopied bed stands against the west wall. Its canopy hangs down in shreds over a blackened lump of rotting cloth that probably once was the mattress and bed coverings. A pair of half-collapsed closets lean against each other by the east wall, their doors on the floor in front of them. A large desk stands under the windows in the north wall, and remnants of a chair lie on the floor beside it. The windows still hold glass in their frames, but the glass seems darkened, as if by soot. There is a passageway in the west wall, next to the bed.

This room was part of the suite occupied by Dexter at the time of the disaster. Areas 27 and 35 are part of the suite.

The closets contain shreds of clothing. On the floors of both are several small pearls and gems, along with tiny gold stars, that appear to have been sewn onto clothing. The drawers in the desk are empty. A PC searching under the bed (after moving some of the rotted cloth) can find a small chest. It is locked and trapped with a poison needle (Type C; 25/2-8 hp damage). The chest contains rotted fragments of parchment, a pen, a bottle half filled with dried ink, and a sealed scroll tube. Inside the tube is a scroll with a single spell: *dimension door.* Dexter kept this as a means of escape in case Lucilla ever found him out. The ink bottle bears the monogram "DS."

While the PCs are in this room, there is a 25% chance per round they will be discovered by the shadows from area 27. The shadows try to sneak along the walls to get into position before attacking.

**27. Tower Suite.** The dark tower is inhabited by a pack of shadows, remnants of Dexter's servants (and a few other people they've killed over the years). The second story of the tower is area 35.

This is a dark, square room, evidently part of a tower detached from the main building of the castle. Broken pieces of furniture lie strewn about the floor. Along the north wall, a staircase that leads up to another floor. A relatively intact desk stands against the side of the staircase. There are two windows in the west wall with soot-darkened glass still in their frames.

The shadows attack as soon as the PCs step into the room. They will pursue the PCs into area 26 if necessary, but not further out into the light.

**Shadows** (13): INT low; AL CE; AC 7; MV 12; HD 3+3; hp 17 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; SA strength drain; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, immune to mind-affecting spells and cold-based attacks, 90% undetectable; SZ M; ML 15; XP 650; MC1.

The shadows have no treasure. If the PCs search through the desk, they find a sealed scroll tube in one of its drawers. The tube contains a very old letter written by Lucilla Germanicus to the mage Dexter Swartz. Give the players a copy of the letter shown on page 24.

The letter is dated more than 300 years ago. Dexter shoved it into the desk drawer shortly before unleashing his attack at the ball (see area 35).

**28. Men's Toilet.** This bathroom is identical in appearance to area 12.

**29. Ladies' Toilet.** This room is identical to area 13. Even the secret door is in the same (awkward) place.

**30. Bathing Room.** The door to this room is *wizard locked* by Lucilla (she still uses it occasionally, using *dimension door* to get to and from the room). This is the castle's only real bathroom.

Five bathtubs of various sizes are neatly placed on the floor of this room. The finely crafted copper tubs are completely intact. Each tub is shaped in the form of an animal or bird: swan, duck, bear, turtle, and lion. Several huge copper cauldrons hang in the large fireplace in the room. Beside the swan-shaped bathtub is a low stool on top of which stand a metal flask and what appears to be a white piece of cloth.

The swan-shaped tub is closest to the fireplace. The cauldrons contain only cold water. There are no ashes in the fireplace, but an empty metal bowl sits beneath one of the cauldrons. A bottle with oil in it stands beside the fireplace. The flask on the stool is of finely crafted silver with a silver stopper. It is a *decanter of endless water*. Lucilla uses it to fill the tub for bathing. She knows the command words to operate the *flask*.

Lucilla was relaxing in the swan-shaped tub when she became aware of Althon's presence in the castle. In her haste to dress, she left behind her towel. The tub still contains water (cold) and the towel is ever-so-slightly damp. Lucilla uses oil to heat the water for the tub in the fireplace (the oil is poured into the metal bowl). There is a drain in the floor of the room that deposits any water poured down it outside the castle.

**31. Tower Room.** The ceiling in this room is shaped like the inside of a square cone, reaching a height of 25′.

A marble altar stands on a dais against the north wall of this room. It is finely decorated with golden ornaments and patterns cut into the marble. On top of it sits a bowl of gold. From the wall behind the altar hang shreds of white cloth, seemingly once a large drapery. All the walls in the room have been plastered white, although large sections of the aging plaster have fallen to the floor. A single, finely crafted cupboard stands against the west wall of the room, south of the entrance.

The cupboard contains two silver goblets (worth 100 gp each) and rotting pieces of cloth that once were altar decorations. Still visible on several of the cloths is the holy symbol of Veritas, a lawful-good goddess of truth and justice once popular in Archstedt. The golden bowl on the altar also bears Veritas's symbol, the single arrow pointing upward. It is worth 200 gp.

**32. Storage Room.** When the PCs first look into this area, they see the following:

To your surprise, when you open the door to this room, you find yourselves gazing straight into the face of a bearded man dressed in a black silk robe set with small golden stars and pearls. He doesn't appear to see you, however, as he quickly turns around and opens one of the closets standing against the north wall. The man disappears into the closet and closes the door behind him.

As soon as the man is gone, everything suddenly becomes pitch black and a terrible chill envelops you. Before there is a chance to react, a terrible scream echoes through the room. After the sound dies out, the darkness disappears and everything is normal again.

The walls in the room are lined with wooden closets and cupboards, many of which are badly rotted and falling to pieces. The room lacks windows.

The man the PCs just saw was a *flashback* of Dexter, making his way to area 33 through the secret door in the closet. Dexter met his fate in area 33 and still haunts that room.

There is nothing of interest in the closets, except for the secret door. They once contained tablecloths, bed spreads, and other linens.

**33. Secret Room.** Soon after the PCs have opened the secret door to this room, they are attacked by the spectre of Dexter that lurks inside.

You gaze into a dark, windowless room. The walls are barren and there is no trace of any furniture. Small puffs of white smoke seep out through the cracks around a sturdy bronze door in the west wall of the room. The air feels strangely chilly.

The spectre in the room attacks the person closest to the door by dropping down from above. It is clearly recognizable as the man the PCs saw in the *flashback* in area 32. The spectre will follow the PCs into area 32 if they retreat, but not further.

**Dexter** (spectre): INT high; AL LE; AC 2; MV 15, fly 30 (B); HD 7+3; hp 35; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA energy drain; SD +1 or better weapons to hit; MR special; SZ M; ML 15; XP 3,000; MC1.

Dexter found out about the existence of this secret room by bribing a servant. He planned to take the staircase (area 34) up to Lucilla's laboratory (area 36), where he hoped to find her immortality

potion. Unfortunately, the monster Dexter had summoned to take care of Lucilla and her friends found him before he got that far.

If the PCs search the room after destroying the spectre, they find an amulet that radiates magic. The amulet is engraved with the name "Dexter." It is an *amulet of proof against detection and location*. Dexter found it very handy. There are also several small golden stars and a few pearls hidden in the dust on the floor.

The bronze door is locked and *wizard locked* (by Lucilla, at 20th level). The lock mechanism is badly corroded and difficult to pick (−50% adjustment to open-locks attempts). The smoke seeping in around the door comes from the staircase (area 34).

**34. Spiral Staircase.** As soon as the PCs open a door to this staircase, the fog inside pours out (see area 10 for the origin of the fog). The DM should make the fog sound as dangerous as possible, as if it were poison gas, although it is in reality quite harmless.

> Billowing clouds of white vapor immediately pour out of the door, rapidly spreading throughout the room.

If the door into the staircase is not closed, the entire floor of the castle will be filled with fog in one turn. The fog is equivalent to the priest spell *obscurement* (visibility is limited to 2'-8'). The fog in the staircase is equivalent to the wizard spell *solid fog* (visibility 2'; movement 1' per round), but it cannot be burned away like the fog produced by that spell.

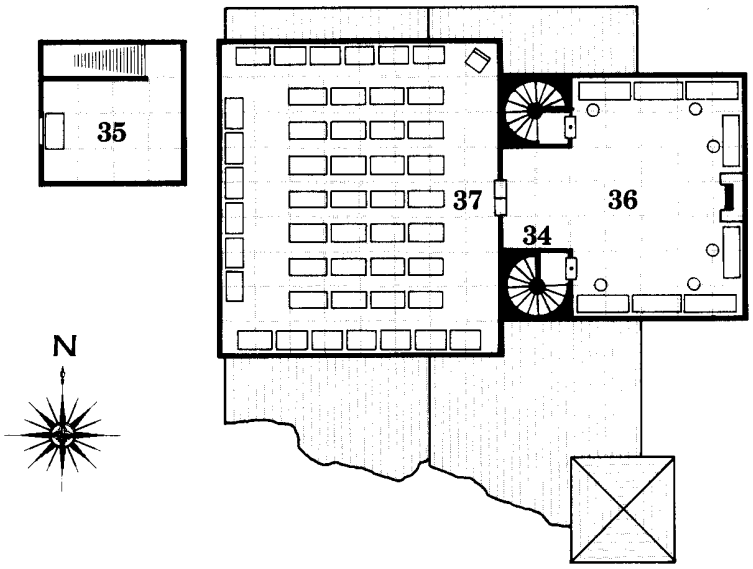
The staircase runs from the first floor of the castle all the way up to the roof of Lucilla's tower. There it ends in a heavy grate that prevents access from the outside but allows the fog to escape into the open. Lucilla has placed an *avoidance* spell on the grate to ward off intruders. There is no access from the staircase to the fifth and sixth floors.

Halfway between the third and fourth floors, the PCs come upon two skeletons.

> Something makes a snapping sound as you take your next step. When you look down, you discover you have stepped on a bone from a human arm, judging by the skeletal hand that lies beside it.

## The Lady's Castle
## Fourth Floor

1 square = 5'




If the PCs investigate (remember the thick fog!), they find two human skeletons lying on the stairs. Both have several broken bones and smashed skulls (inflicted by the golem in area 36). Two badly corroded swords lie by the skeletons. One of the swords is broken and the missing piece is nowhere to be found. There are two badly rotted backpacks on the skeletons. Both contain rope (unusable), torches, and several flasks of oil. One contains a tinderbox, a set of thieves' tools, and a pouch containing a few coins (13 gp and 26 sp) dating back over 100 years. These two unfortunates have been dead for more than a century.

The door exiting the staircase on the fourth floor is locked (corroded lock, −50% chance to pick) and *wizard locked.*

### Fourth Floor

The fourth floor is still in use by Lucilla. The only access to this floor is through the spiral staircase (see area 34). The doors to the staircase are locked and *wizard locked* on all floors. Lucilla moves between floors using the north staircase (and *dimension door*), the doors to which are also *wizard locked.*

**35. Tower Suite.** The second story of the tower suite contains beds once used by Dexter's servants. It also contains a *flashback* featuring Dexter himself (the same person seen in areas 32 and 33).

> The second story of the tower is as dark and dismal as the ground floor. There are remnants of three beds against the south wall of the room, and two closets by the east wall.
>
> A dark-haired man dressed in an elegant black silk robe decorated with pearls and small golden stars sits at a small table beneath the window in the west wall. On the table in front of him lies an opened letter. The man is leaning back in his chair as he stares absentmindedly out through the window.

This is a *flashback* and cannot be affected in any way by the PCs. The image is of Dexter reading Lucilla's last letter to him, shortly before he let loose his attack in the ballroom. The PCs can walk right up behind Dexter and read the text of the letter (see page 24). Five minutes after the PCs arrive, Dexter turns his head toward the stairs behind

him and the image (including the letter) disappears.

The table is very fragile and will collapse if put under any load. The closets contain nothing but rotted clothing. The beds contain nothing of interest.

**36. Laboratory.** The doors to both spiral staircases are *wizard locked.* The bronze door to the south staircase is also locked (normal chances of picking) and protected by a permanent *alarm* spell that goes off as soon as the door is opened. The vapors from the south staircase flow into this room as soon as that door is opened, filling the room (equivalent to an *obscurement* spell) in five rounds.

> Gazing out from the thick white vapors in the staircase, you look into a vast, dark, windowless room. As you sweep your light through the darkness, it falls on workbenches that line the walls all around. Sitting on top of these are glass beakers, bottles, tubes, and numerous other items whose names you don't even know. Hundreds upon hundreds of small glass bottles stand on shelves hanging from the walls above the work benches. On the floor below stand wooden and copper barrels. Several wooden stools are placed along the work benches. Everything seems remarkably intact and clean.
>
> Your attention is suddenly drawn to the sound of tinkling glass coming from within the room. As you turn your light in the direction of the sound, it reflects off a dazzling, man-shaped figure approaching you with rapid steps. The whole figure seems made of clear crystal or glass. Meanwhile, the vapors from the staircase are rapidly filling the room, already obscuring the ceiling.

**Crystal golem:** INT non; AL N; AC 4; MV 12; HD 9; hp 40; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 2d10; SA *color spray* on one opponent within 20′ every other round; SD +2 or better weapon to hit, immune to all spells except *shatter* (causes 3d8 hp damage) and *mending* (restores it to full hit points); SZ M; ML 20; XP 6,000; new monster.

The crystal golem is shaped like a stylized man with sharp features. It is tall and slender but is not two dimensional like the glass golem (MC10). It attacks using its sharp hands (causing both cutting and bludgeoning damage). Blunt magical weapons cause normal damage to it.

The golem immediately tries to push the PCs back down the staircase. Its mission is to prevent intruders from entering Lucilla's section of the castle. It always tries to protect the door to the north staircase. It uses its *color spray* capability from the second round of combat.

The crystal golem is a tough encounter for the PCs. The DM should remember that the golem's primary duty is to expel the PCs from this floor, not necessarily by killing them. Anyone felled by the golem is dumped in the south staircase. The vapors from the staircase may work to the PCs' advantage; at least they can use them as cover to try to hide from the golem. In any case, the golem never leaves the door to the north staircase unguarded (even if the PCs go into the library, area 37).

The bottles on the shelves contain several potions: *delusion* (1), *elixir of health* (2), *elixir of youth* (2), *extra-healing* (3), *fire resistance* (2), *flying* (1), *healing* (5), *improved elixir of youth* with double effect (1), *invisibility* (1), *levitation* (2), *longevity* (2), *oil of stone to flesh* (1) like the one possessed by Hakon, *sweet water* (3), and *vitality* (6). The DM may decide how the bottles are labeled. Bottles not containing potions hold various chemicals and other components an alchemist would find very interesting.

**37. Library.** This room is illuminated by *continual light* spells placed on the ceiling.

> The walls of this brightly lit, windowless room are lined with tall bookcases full of books. Lower bookcases stand evenly spaced on the floor of the room. In the northeast corner there is a comfortable leather armchair with a small table by its side. Two books lie on the table. A glass globe containing a light source sits on top of a metal rod by the chair. Everything is spotlessly clean.

The majority of books in this vast library deal with properties of common, physical matter and the human body. There are textbooks on first aid as well as strange tomes that speak of the "harmonies of the celestial spheres." A few works of fiction can be found here and there. The two books lying on the small table are just that. One is an intact, handwritten, first edition copy of *The Elven Maiden and the Unicorn,* a once-popular novel about the struggles of a young (relatively speaking) elven maiden and her trusty unicorn as they escape from slavery in an evil kingdom to find peace and happiness among kind shepherds, until one day they are saved by an elven prince who happens to visit the shepherds' village. It's a real tear-jerker. The other book is the classic *Blancheflor,* a tale of knights in shining armor and fair princesses in need of rescue.

If the PCs devote some time to investigating the library (an hour or two), they can discover that there is a common theme to many of the books. The library contains many books and scrolls centered on healing and slowing the aging processes of the body. A few books even speak of legendary ways to attain immortality. The DM may feel free to provide further detail to this theme. There are no spell books to be found here (Lucilla has destroyed them).

### Fifth and Sixth Floors

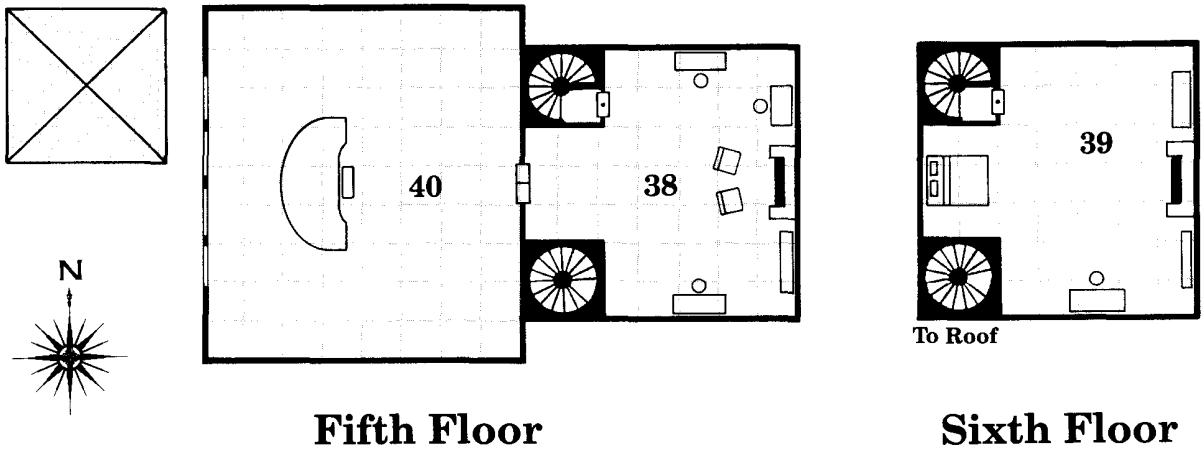
The fifth and sixth floors are where Lucilla spends most of her time (and will spend all of her time during this adventure).

**38. Living Room.** The door from the north staircase into this room is *wizard locked* and further protected by an *alarm* spell.

> A surprising sight greets you as you gaze into this room. A fire burns in a large fireplace on the east wall, casting its light on two large leather armchairs. A finely crafted small wooden table stands on a thick rug between the chairs. Several tall, richly ornamented cupboards with glass doors stand against the north and south walls. Inside, you see fine china, glasses of various colors and designs, and bottles containing fluids. A desk made of dark, exotic wood is placed against the north wall. A comfortable chair stands nearby. Everything in the room is perfectly intact and very clean.
>
> Lying on the floor close to where you stand is a long, furry, black, snakelike object. It doesn't seem to be moving.

# The Lady's Castle

1 square = 5′




Gentle harp music suddenly fills the air from behind the closed doors to the west. You recognize the melody; you've heard its sad notes many times lately.

The snakelike object is one of Arkhan's stuffed toys. He left it lying here when he and Lucilla went into the organ chamber (area 40).

The cupboards contain fine china and crystal of a total value exceeding 10,000 gp. The fluids in the bottles taste like exotic fruit juices. They are all very nourishing (Lucilla has to eat again nowadays). The fire in the fireplace is fueled by oil; a bottle of it stands nearby.

On the desk is a list of names—19 in all—written on a very old piece of parchment. Some have additional names scrawled beside them (aliases). Eighteen names have been crossed out. One of these is "Althon Edelman." His name is scrawled beside the name "Antonius Mercatus." A heading at the top of the list reads "The Immortals." Lucilla Germanicus is the first name on the list. It is the only one not crossed out.

**39. Lucilla's Bedroom** (On floor six, above area 38).

The floor of this spacious and nicely decorated bedroom is covered with expensive rugs from distant lands. Fine tapestries depicting beautiful landscapes hang on the white walls. A low fire burns in a large fireplace in the east wall. A large canopied bed rests in an alcove of the west wall. The bed cover is embroidered with a monogram of the letters "LG." At the foot of the bed is a large, low, wicker basket with several pillows in it. Several closets are placed against the north wall, with an elegant dressing table close by. A desk and chair stand by the south wall next to a pedestal bearing the bust of a beautiful woman. Two empty bookcases stand to either side of the desk.

Lucilla is downstairs in the organ chamber (area 40) during the course of this adventure (until the very end, when she comes up here to die).

The fire in the fireplace is fueled by oil and what remains of the books that once filled the bookcases. These books contained Lucilla's spells and potion recipes. If the DM desires, the PCs may be able to salvage a few pages of spells (or a potion recipe) from the flames (suggestion: four spells of levels 1-6.)

The low basket with all the pillows is Arkhan's. It's where he rests and plays with his toys while Lucilla is sleeping. There are various stuffed toys in the basket along with the pillows. The closets are filled with a variety of different clothes and several wigs: the clothes of a peasant woman, a merchant, a maid, a noble lady, a beggar, etc. Lucilla used these clothes as disguises on her missions to kill fellow Immortals. There is an extensive makeup kit on the dressing table. The bust is a very good likeness of Lucilla (it was once the head of the statue in area 11). The bookcases are empty; Lucilla has destroyed all records of her research.

The five tapestries in the room are worth 1,000-4,000 gp each. The three rugs are worth 300-1,800 gp each. There is nothing else of value in the room.

**40. Organ Chamber.** Here the PCs finally meet Lucilla and her companion, the tiger Arkhan. This encounter must

be played very carefully by the DM.

Thoroughly weary of the world, and with the last Immortal (not counting herself) now dead, Lucilla has taken the antidote and will die shortly (although she will always live long enough to give the PCs a chance to meet her first). She views the PCs as persons to tell her sad story to, that others may learn from her mistakes. She also wants to make sure that Arkhan is not left alone (his immortality has not yet worn off).

The windows into the organ chamber are made of *glassteel*. They have the additional property of letting light through in only one direction (it is impossible to look in through the windows from the outside).

The keyboard of the organ is very complicated and has many additional keys and levers not normally found on such instruments. It can be made to sound like any known instrument, even a group of instruments such as an entire orchestra. The skill of the organist is the only limit. Any music played on the organ will also be heard outside the castle (thanks to a certain amount of magic). If the PCs randomly press keys and pull levers, there is a 50% chance per attempt they will activate the auto-play feature of the organ, in which case it will play Lucilla's farewell tune once more.

When the PCs enter the organ chamber, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> A woman sits facing away from you at the keyboard of an enormous organ placed in the center of this vast chamber. She is dressed in a beautiful white gown and wears a golden circlet in her graying black hair. Her fingers move over the keys of the organ producing gentle, sweet notes that sound as if they had come from a harp, not from the huge thing in front of you. On the floor by the woman's feet is a large tiger facing in your direction, its eyes intently staring at you. Behind the organ, in the west wall, beautiful stained-glass windows rise to the full height of the room (20'-25').
>
> Suddenly you hear a voice, a growling, deep, male voice. "Welcome! Welcome friends! I am Arkhan, and this is Lady Lucilla Germanicus. Welcome to our home!"
>
> You realize no words were actually said; the voice was in your heads. You also realize the tiger is looking at you in a very strange way, almost as if it were expecting a reply or a response of some kind. The music draws to a close, and the woman at the keyboard turns around to face you.

If the PCs encountered Lucilla's illusion in areas 21-23 they will immediately recognize her. Her hair is streaked with more gray, and she has a few more wrinkles, but her face is kind and still beautiful. Her likeness is also clearly recognizable in the bust Hakon gave the PCs.

If the PCs attack Lucilla, she will not defend herself. Arkhan, however, will spring to her aid. Since he is still immortal, he cannot be permanently hurt by any attack form. A *fireball* will burn off his fur but not kill him. A weapon will cause pain and damage, but only momentarily. Any damage sustained (whether of magical or physical origin) is immediately regenerated the following round. It is possible to temporarily knock Arkhan out if he receives more damage than he has hit points in a single round. He will need one round to recover fully from this. Of course he can still be tied up or magically held. Complete decapitation is fatal unless the head is reattached to the body within a few minutes.

**Lucilla Germanicus:** AL LN; AC 0; MV 12; W20; hp 39; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type (unarmed); S 11, D 16, C 10, I 19, W 12, Ch 18; ML 20. The DM may select Lucilla's memorized spells, although this should not be required. (If it is done, her spell list must include at least one *item* spell, which she used to take care of Althon's body.)

Lucilla has a magical ring on each finger (*protection +3* and *free action*), her dress is magical (equivalent to *cloak of protection +5*), she wears a magical amulet (*amulet versus undead*; 8th level), and in the pockets of her dress she has several items created using the wizard spell *item* (detailed below). The gold circlet acts as an *amulet of proof against detection and location*.

**Arkhan** (tiger): INT very; AL LG; AC 6; MV 12; HD 5+5; hp 45; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 2-5/2-5/1-10; SA rear claws for 2-8 hp each; SD surprise only on a 1; SZ L; ML 15; MC1 (adapted).

Arkhan can communicate telepathically, although he can only send, not receive thoughts. He understands many languages (thanks to many years of practice with Lucilla).

If the PCs are willing to communicate with Lucilla, this is what she has to say (in a slightly archaic accent):

> "My friends! I am so glad you have finally found your way up here. I hope you are not angered at my initial attempts to drive you away. This is Arkhan, my dearest friend [she pets the tiger on the head]. I don't know if he has introduced himself to you yet."
>
> You hear a low, growling voice in your heads again. "Yes, my Lady. I have."
>
> "Good! Now tell me, why have you come here? Why have you come to see me?"

Lucilla already suspects the PCs' arrival has something to do with Althon. Whether the PCs admit being after Althon or not, she will let them meet him. Lucilla has used an *item* spell to shrink and transform his body to a piece of cloth.

> "Althon Edelman was a very, very old friend of mine. Of course, he did not go by that name when I knew him. I much prefer his real name: Antonius Mercatus. I am sure you would like to know what has happened to him and why he came here. Let me call him in, shall I?"
>
> Lucilla slowly pulls out a small piece of white cloth from her dress and drops it to the floor by her side. As soon as it touches the floor, it is transformed into the dead body of Althon Edelman. You recognize his face, as anyone having spent some time in Archstedt would, since his likeness appears on coins. But he looks much older than you remember him being. Althon should be in his forties. Judging by his face, he appears to be almost twice that age.
>
> "This is Althon. He is dead, unfortunately. I killed him. He did have a full life before he died, though. You see, Althon was over 400 years old. At that age, death is only to be expected, I suppose. Yes, we have all lived long, full lives, have we not, Arkhan?"
>
> Arkhan's now familiar telepathic voice growls, "Yes, my Lady."
>
> "My friends, I have a story to tell you, if you are willing to listen. It is my tale, an explanation of why you

find me here today, and why I killed Althon. I wish you to hear it so I may be remembered for who I truly was, so my mistakes will not be repeated.

"You see, I too am more than four centuries old, but very soon I am going to die at last. Destiny has brought you here to record my story and to let the world know what happened here one fateful evening 300 years ago."

The DM should narrate the essential parts of Lady Lucilla's life as presented in "For the Dungeon Master," under the heading "The Lady of the Mists." The narration should take the form of a dialog, if possible, not a monologue (let the PCs ask questions).

The most important items in Lucilla's story are: the invention of the immortality potion and the motivations behind it; the formation of the group of Immortals (where Althon, or Antonius, was a member); Lucilla's encounter with the handsome mage Dexter, whom she describes in detail (see areas 32 and 35); Dexter's betrayal of her love and the disaster he caused at the ball; Lucilla's isolation in her ruined castle (together with Arkhan); her decision to right her wrong by killing all the Immortals (talking about it brings her to tears); her discovery that she had begun to age again; and finally, the arrival of Althon, the last Immortal (excepting herself), and his death (due to the antidote that she gave him).

There is nothing left of the immortality potion. She has destroyed every bit of research concerning it (and the antidote). She has also destroyed her spell books and most of the magical items she accumulated over the centuries. Now she has one final request.

When Lucilla has finished her story, she pauses and looks, with a hint of horror in her face, at her hands. You suddenly realize she has grown significantly older since you first entered the room. Her skin is much more wrinkled, particularly on her hands and face.

Regaining her composure, she looks up at you again and continues speaking. "I ask of you now one last favor. Please take care of Arkhan for me." She strokes his head again as tears form in her eyes. "His immortality will soon wear off, and he will need someone to take care of him then. I beg you, please do this for me. In return, I offer you my last worldly possessions."

She removes her rings, amulet, and circlet. "Here, take these. Anything else you want in the castle is yours as well."

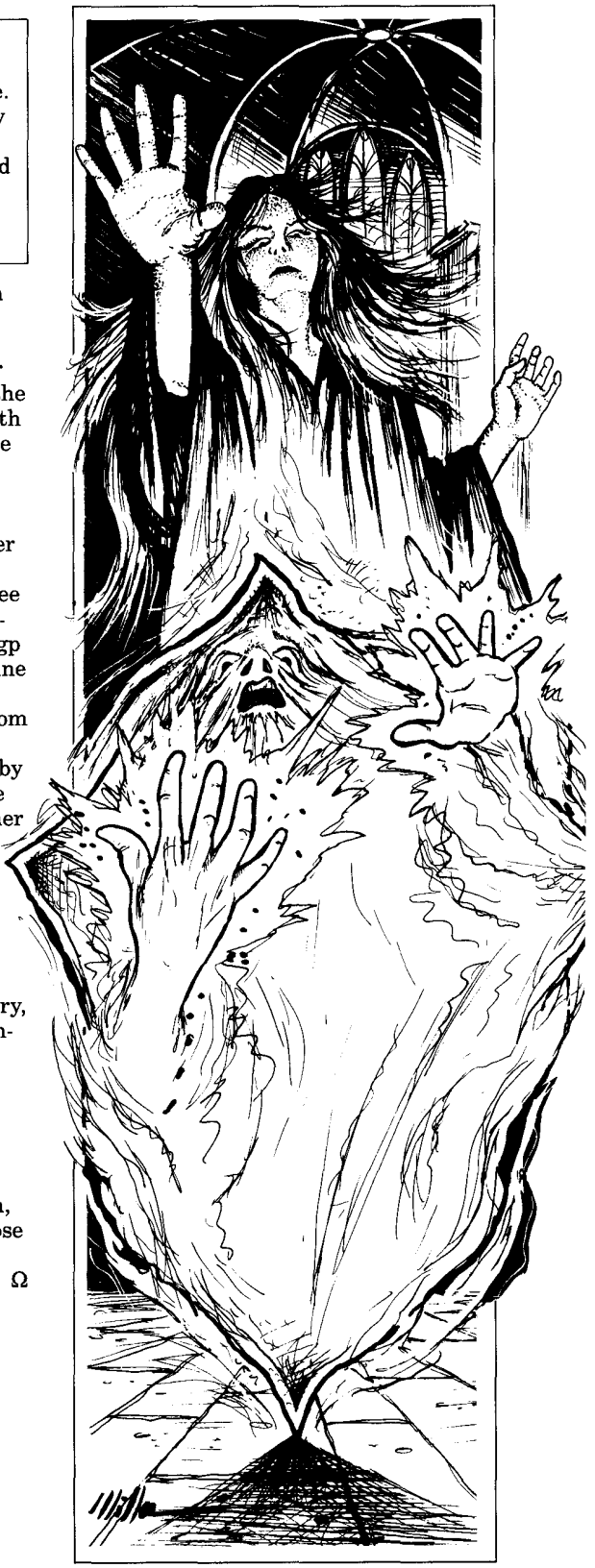
Arkhan begins to age normally soon after leaving the castle with the PCs. He will retain his ability to communicate telepathically, however. The tiger will try to befriend one of the PCs in the group, preferably a human woman with an alignment compatible with his. The DM should treat Arkhan as a henchman to this PC.

Before she leaves, Lucilla pulls out two more small pieces of cloth from her pockets and drops them onto the floor. They transform into a scroll (with three *item* spells on it) and a pouch (containing 10 rubies of approximately 1,000-gp base value each; the DM may determine their exact value).

Lucilla then rises to go to her bedroom (area 39). She is beginning to feel the effects of the antidote. Arkhan walks by her side, head drooping in sorrow. She asks to be left alone with Arkhan in her final moments. Once in her bedroom, she climbs into her bed, with Arkhan sitting on the floor by her side, and hugs him until she dies.

## Concluding the Adventure

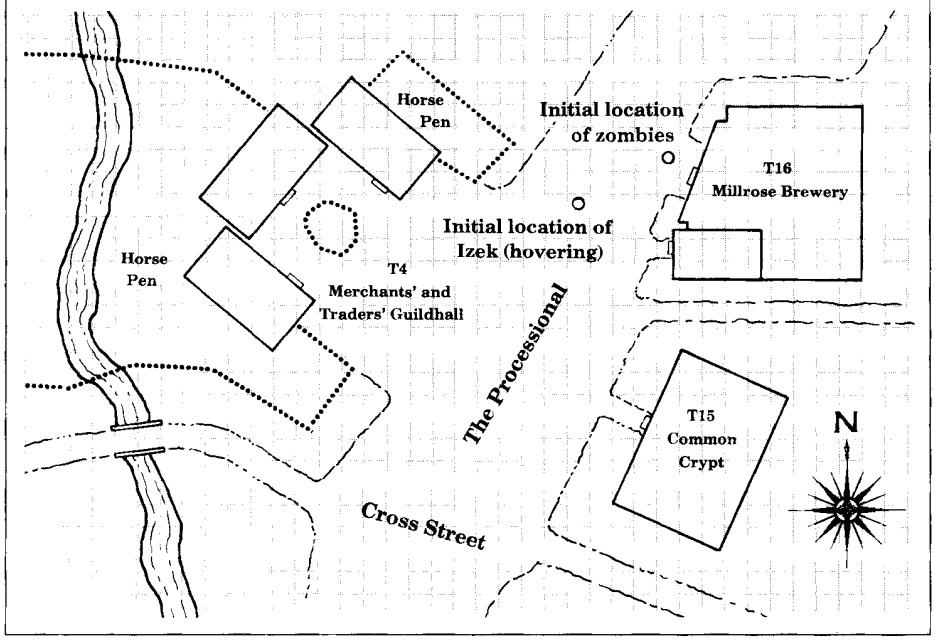
Having met Lucilla and heard her story, the PCs are free to conclude the adventure in any manner they desire. To complete their mission, they need to transport Althon's body back to the capital (an *item* spell might come in handy for this). If they do this, they should be awarded a story award of 20,000 XP. If they forget their mission, they gain no story award. If they choose not to complete it, the story award should be 5,000 XP. Ω



# IZEK'S

## Greyhawk City
## Central Thieves' quarter

1 square = 20'




# After the big sleep

BY GARY LAI

"Izek's Slumber" is an AD&D® adventure for a single wizard character of 12th-14th level. Other classes or a group of 2-4 characters of 7th-10th level (25 total levels) may also be used, but PCs without spells may have extreme difficulty with this encounter.

This scenario takes place in the Thieves' Quarter of Greyhawk City in the WORLD OF GREYHAWK® fantasy setting, but it can be adapted for any town. Greyhawk City is detailed in the *City of Greyhawk* boxed set.

### Adventure Background

The adventure begins as the PC strolls the city streets in the morning. Read or paraphrase the following to the player:

> Sol's golden orb rises slowly in the dawn's haze, rousing the city from its nightly slumber. Sunlight bathes the city streets, lifting the mantle of night and leaving only shadows in its wake. Birdsong reaches your ears, mixing with the sounds of bustling peasants. Awash in these sights and sounds, you make your way through the city streets.
>
> A young girl runs up to you with her black braid and her white frock rustling behind her. She stops, curtsies, and addresses you in a hurried tone. "Excuse me," she begins, her eyes on the ground. "I implore you to help me." Pointing to the south, she says, "A dark-robed sorcerer has gone mad! He speaks harshly and in a strange tongue. His anger and craft have already set three buildings afire! And . . ." she pauses, her voice trembling, "he walks with the dead. Come quickly please! We can't stop his march, but you can!" And as she speaks, the din of screaming peasants comes from the south, arcane explosions rise above the city, and a large plume of black smoke climbs into the southern sky.

### For the DUNGEON MASTER™

In an age long past, before the mighty walls of Greyhawk stood over Oerik's central plain, two tribes met in battle along the banks of the Selintan River. Both were fleeing from the horror of their collapsing kingdoms in the west, and both wanted to claim the wealth of these new lands in the east. Blood was drawn on both sides, but the fighting meant little. It was only a prelude to the great magical duel that was to be fought that evening. This was the age of great sorcery, when the duels of mighty mages determined mens' fates.

Izek, a battlemage of the Suel tribe who had studied the art of destruction for three decades, wrought havoc against his enemies with evocations. He was dominating Oserak, an Oerid enchanter he had battled on many occasions and who had become his archrival. But then Oserak, who had been feigning weakness to exploit Izek's overconfidence, played his trump. From a scroll he successfully cast the powerful *sink* spell (see the *Player's Handbook,* page 192). Screaming in agony as he sank into an earthen tomb, Izek vowed vengeance. That was a millennium ago.

Centuries later, merchants began flocking to the region where the forgotten battle had been fought. It was an ideal locale for trade, and they erected there the walls of Greyhawk City. The founders of the city were buried in tombs beneath the streets.

Successive generations of leaders were likewise buried in newly dug tombs. One day, a digger in the catacombs broke rock for a new crypt and to his chagrin, unleashed a long contained evil.

# SLUMBER

Disoriented, Izek seized the surprised digger and demanded to know where he was. But as he was speaking in Suloise, now a forgotten tongue, he elicited no response. Without comprehension of how long he had been slumbering, Izek suspects that Oserak is still nearby. His belief in this delusion is fed by the fact that he is still very disoriented (800 years of suspended animation does that), and by his previous experiences with Oserak, who had pulled similar illusory tricks on him many times.

Pushing aside the digger, he opened nearby coffins and animated seven zombies. Then he ascended to the streets, where he is now roaming the neighborhood, questioning residents and getting no response. What he doesn't know is that Oserak fell in battle soon after their duel, before he was able to slay Izek for good.

Brief descriptions have been given below of the buildings where this encounter occurs. DMs who have access to the *City of Greyhawk* boxed set may recognize this section of the city. In fact, areas have been numbered on this module's map exactly as they appear on the city map in that set for convenience. If you don't have this set, you may want to detail a few more buildings.

Izek first emerged from the common crypt (area T15), and preceded to the Merchants' and Traders' Guildhall (area T4). He questioned the guards there without attacking first, but fearful of his zombies and suspicious of his poor manners, they foolishly attacked him anyway. In response, Izek ignited the hall with his *wand of fireballs,* scattering everyone in fear. Burning buildings or killing innocents doesn't bother Izek. On the contrary, he hopes such carnage will draw out Oserak or a sorcerer who can help him find Oserak. Izek then headed toward the Millrose Brewery (area T16) and is outside, about to enter, as the PC arrives.

## Encounter Areas

**T4. Merchants' and Traders' Guildhall.** These three buildings are ablaze and will burn down in three turns. Ten townspeople are trying, with little success, to put out the fire with water from the stream. All the animals in the pen have crashed through the gate and fled.

**T15. The Common Crypt.** This mausoleum leads to a vast complex of catacombs where many of the city's dead are buried. Ashes are stored on the ground floor, while a stairway leads 60′ down to a chamber (50′ × 50′ × 8′) where seven of the 60 coffins have been opened. A passage leads west and north to other crypts. Izek slumbered 40′ down this passage.

**T16. The Millrose Brewery.** This single-story building has one room, filled with brewing vats. Ten workers are trapped within, for the only entrance is surrounded by zombies. If the PC doesn't come to the scene, the zombies will break down the door in three rounds. When the workers fight back in fear, Izek will be forced to use his wand again.

**Zombies** (7): INT non; AL N; AC 8; MV 6; HD 2, hp 15, 12 (×2), 11, 9 (×2), 7; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; MR special; SZ M; ML 20; XP 65; MC1.

**Izek:** AL LE; AC 3; MV 12; M14 (invoker); hp 61; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 10, D 15, C 16, I 16, W 9, Ch 9; ML 14; XP 8,000; *bracers of defense AC 4, dagger +4, wand of fireballs* (67 charges), potion of *extra-healing.*

Spells: *feather fall, magic missile* (×2); *continual darkness, invisibility, stinking cloud, web; dispel magic, fireball, fly, lightning bolt; dimension door, ice storm, improved invisibility, minor globe of invulnerability; cone of cold, teleport, transmute rock to mud, wall of force; death spell; limited wish.* This list doesn't represent Izek's true potential, only the spells he still has memorized. He has had no chance to regain the spells he used against Oserak before his long sleep.

When encountered, Izek still has spells in effect, their expiration postponed by the greater magic of the *sink* spell. Now that Izek is free from its enchantment, assume that all of the following spells still have half their normal durations: *shield; fly, protection from normal missiles; stoneskin* (eight hits left); *spell turning* (five levels left). Note that Izek is an invoker, so opponents suffer a −1 penalty when saving against his evocation spells. Also note carefully the magical protections Izek has active at any time—they are extensive.

In addition to the items above, Izek wears black robes embroidered with Suloise runes. If the PC has proficiency in ancient history and expresses an interest in the robe, he may learn that the runes identify an ancient Suloise battlemage and are a thousand years outdated. The robe is worth 1,000 gp undamaged or 500 gp damaged to historians. Izek also carries two pouches. One is filled with spell components. The other holds his magical items, a private journal written in Suloise (worth up to 1,250 gp to historians), and 50 gold coins (worth 50 gp total, or 100 gp each if sold to appropriate collectors).

Born into a Suel society with rigid castes, Izek has been training as a battlemage—an invoker who learns his arts only for battle—since age four. Such training has not fostered morals; instead it has forged a hostile and cunning mind, trained to kill and exploit weakness. Indeed, Izek lives to kill. He is a machine of destruction, of a breed that died with the Suel Empire. Izek appears to be about 40 years old, with pale skin and blue eyes. He is completely shaved: no hair, no beard, no eyebrows.

## Izek's Strategy

When the PC arrives at the scene, Izek is flying 20′ above the ground, scanning the area as his zombies bash open the door to the Millrose Brewery. If the PC doesn't attempt to conceal himself, Izek spots him first. If, however, the PC states that he is scanning the sky, the two spot each other at the same time.

Izek flies toward the PC, depending on his magical protections to save him from an initial attack. In Suloise, he demands to know the whereabouts of the wizard Oserak. His pose is threatening and his wand is at the ready, as he isn't used to acting politely.

If the PC manages to explain to Izek, by mundane or magical means, the true nature of his surroundings (not an easy task), the battlemage slowly comes to

realize what has transpired. Realizing the futility of searching for an opponent who must have perished ages ago, Izek cancels his *animate dead* spell and leaves the city. But if the PC's explanation is poor, Izek continues his rampage. His disorientation perpetuates the delusion that his ancient battle is yet unfinished.

If attacked, Izek instantly uses his *dimension door* spell to reach the southern wall of the common crypt, then casts *minor globe of invulnerability* and *improved invisibility.* He then flies to within 120′ of the PC, hovering at a height of 40′. Moving constantly and *invisibly* so that he is difficult to track, Izek casts spells in the following order: *fireball, magic missile, transmute rock to mud, cone of cold, ice storm, lightning bolt, web, and magic missile. Transmute rock to mud* and *cone of cold* are deadly in combination; anyone stuck in frozen mud can't get out until it melts and isn't entitled to saving throws against spells. These spells are only suggestions and may need to be adjusted to suit the circumstances.

When using specific target spells like *magic missile,* Izek concentrates on the weakest-looking person, moving on to the next weakest only when the first is dead. He may use his wand as well. Izek's zombies also engage the PC. The battlemage isn't afraid of flying to safety and drinking his potion of *extra-healing,* or of *teleporting* miles away in retreat. Remember, Izek is extremely cunning and won't take undue risks!

After examining this strategy, you'll probably understand why this module is so difficult for PCs without spells! Izek's *fly, stoneskin,* and *protection from normal missiles* spells make him immune to most physical attacks. Note that *protection from normal missiles* works before *stoneskin;* an arrow flying at him is deflected by the former before it can affect the latter.

## Concluding the Adventure

If the PC manages to handle Izek nonviolently, he still receives the normal experience-point award. But if he slays the battlemage or causes him to retreat through battle, within two days the town watch will call the PC to an audience with Lord Mayor Nerof Gasgal, who thanks the PC and grants him the status of High Citizen (which affords tax exemption), as well as 500 gp. (If there is more than one PC, this reward must be shared; Greyhawk City has many other pressing financial concerns.)

If the PC engages Izek but only drives him off, he will have an enemy for life.

If the PC refuses to handle the menace, others will step forward. The girl who asked for help at the beginning of the adventure is Jallarzi Sallavarian (see *Folk, Feuds, and Factions,* page 27, in the CITY OF GREYHAWK boxed set), a powerful wizard and member of a band known as the Circle of Eight. It is in her best interest to keep her true identity hidden, so she tries to enlist the PC. If the PC doesn't help, she will risk her cover by launching a *dispel magic* spell at Izek from hiding, causing him to plummet toward the ground. Disoriented, he *teleports* away, eventually to join the ranks of the Scarlet Brotherhood, a nation in the east bent on reviving ancient Suloise culture.

*Gary is a sophomore at Cornell University, majoring in Economics and English. This, his first published work, is dedicated to his girlfriend Maja for all the hope and happiness she has given him.* Ω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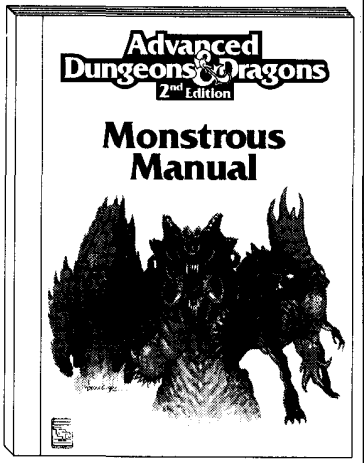


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# RANSOM

BY DAVID HOWERY

## Blood is thicker than water, but gold is thicker than blood.

Artwork By Charles Dougherty

*David writes: "Currently, I live in Mountain Home, Idaho. I've written over 20 articles for* DUNGEON® Adventures, DRAGON® Magazine, *and* The General *from Avalon Hill. This is my eighth module for this magazine. I graduated from Montana State University in 1983 and have been writing for TSR's magazines since 1986."*

This D&D® adventure is for 4-7 lawful player characters of levels 3-5 (about 22 total levels). Page numbers given here refer to the D&D *Rules Cyclopedia (RC).*

### Adventure Background

Banditry is a fact of life across the Known World, wherever there are wild lands or hostile borders. Karameikos, with its vast wilderness areas, suffers badly from such depredations. The most infamous gang on the northern border is that of Thoros the kidnapper.

The fief of Sir Reynald stands on the northern border near Threshold. A week ago, Reynald's oldest son, Baldwin, was kidnapped by Thoros. The bandit heard that Baldwin would be traveling to Specularum with a small escort, there to be trained as a squire by his father's boyhood friend. The bandits surprised the group, slew the two men-at-arms, and captured the 10-year-old boy. Thoros later sent a ransom note to Reynald, asking for a huge sum of money. Business as usual for Thoros, but a new experience for Reynald.

Reynald plans to send a treasure chest across the border, as instructed, but he doesn't want to use his own troops. He doesn't trust them to keep their cool when facing the bandits. Thus, he decided to hire a group of adventurers for the job. After a quick survey of available personnel in the area, he has decided to contact the PCs.

### For the Player Characters

The PCs should start the adventure near Threshold. The party receives an invitation, by special courier, to visit Reynald in his castle. It is common knowledge that Reynald's son was recently kidnapped, and that Reynald has been interviewing adventurers. If the PCs decide to accept Reynald's invitation, they are escorted into Reynald's office, where he is waiting for them.

Reynald is a tall, strong man with a well-worn sword at his hip. However, his eyes are bloodshot and sunken in dark circles; the kidnapping has left him haggard. After motioning you to be seated, Reynald rises and speaks.

"Greetings, and many thanks for answering my invitation. I am Reynald, lord of this border castle. As you may know, my son Baldwin was recently kidnapped by the bandit Thoros. He is being held somewhere north of the border.

"I have decided to send the ransom across the border, but I need someone to take it there. I cannot send my own troops. I fear my hot-headed soldiers will risk my son's life by doing something foolish when they face the bandits. I need cool, experienced adventurers for the job.

"I offer each of you 500 gp to take the ransom to the designated spot and recover Baldwin. Your reward is payable upon my boy's safe return."

If the PCs decline, Reynald asks them to keep the meeting secret and shows them out. If the PCs accept, Reynald begins to make preparations for their trip. Reynald can be bargained up to 650 gp each, but no higher. If asked how much ransom has been demanded, Reynald only smiles grimly and say that it is of no relevance to the PCs.

**Reynald:** AC 2 [8]; hp 60; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; MV 90′ (30′) [120′ (40′)]; save F10; ML 12; AL N; S 18, I 14, W 10, D 14, C 16, Ch 17; XP 1,100; plate mail, shield, long sword, dagger. In his castle, surrounded by his men, Reynald does not wear armor and has the armor class and movement noted in brackets.

## For the DUNGEON MASTER™

Reynald is less than sincere about his concern for his son. Not only is he selfishly neutral in alignment, he is also losing his mind, due to the interference of his chief advisor.

The problem began years ago, when Reynald married his wife, Belesa. Her first husband, the former lord of this fief, died in a border skirmish. The young widow was married to Reynald just days later, a common practice in feudal lands. Duke Karameikos likes strong border fiefs and did not want this one to fall to raiders from lack of leadership.

Baldwin was born exactly nine months later, and there has always been doubt as to his paternity. The boy resembles his mother but doesn't look like either of Belesa's husbands, so the question is unanswered. Reynald claims Baldwin as his son but has always had his doubts. He treats his two younger sons with much more affection.

Reynald is a selfish and paranoid man who has ambitions to rule far more than a single fief someday. He also thinks that unknown persons are out to stop his deserved rise to fame and power. In spite of his paranoia, Reynald's strong personality and his high Charisma let him present a kind and caring mask to others.

Reynald's selfishness would have amounted to little if not for the treachery of his main advisor, Antar. This man is actually an agent of wicked Baron von Hendricks of Fort Doom. In order to place his own agent in charge of the border fief, Hendricks must get rid of Reynald. Antar was inserted into Reynald's service years ago, and has slowly worked on Reynald's mind. He has used Reynald's natural paranoia to convince him that Baldwin is not his true son, and has played on Reynald's greed to make him extraordinarily miserly and ambitious.

The kidnapping has given Antar a golden opportunity. He tried to convince Reynald to ignore the ransom demand and let Baldwin perish. Why pay a large sum for a son of questionable heritage when he has two more sons that are definitely his? Of course, Antar knows that this despicable act would cause Reynald's immediate removal by Duke Karameikos. That is Antar's goal. Antar was disappointed when Reynald decided to pay the ransom.

However, Antar has succeeded better than he knows. Reynald is indeed furious about paying a large ransom for a questionable son. He has devised a plot that he hopes will bring destruction down upon Thoros and his men, without implicating him as a heartless monster.

**Antar:** AC 9; M2; hp 6; MV 120′ (40′); #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; Save M2; ML 8; AL C; S 10, I 17, W 10, D 11, C 12, Ch 17; XP 35; dagger, 12 gp. Spell book: *analyze, charm person, read magic* (can memorize any two per day).

## The Journey

The instructions on the ransom note are clear. The ransom is to be taken to the small village of Utica, 10 miles north of the Duchy's border. There, the bandits will contact the PCs and lead them to a secret location where the exchange will be made. Reynald provides a sturdy mule to carry the treasure chest filled with the ransom. The chest is 2′ wide, 2′ high, 3′ long, and weighs 150 lbs.

The chest is exceptional, an heirloom of Belesa's family. Although it appears to be made of iron, the chest is actually an alloy of steel and adamantite, impervious to weapons and cutting tools. The lock is magical. If opened by magic or picked by thieves, it automatically relocks itself before the lid can be lifted. Only members of Belesa's family, including Reynald and Baldwin, can open the chest. Thus, the PCs will not be able to examine the ransom before delivering it to Thoros. Reynald is also depending on the PCs' lawful alignment to keep them honest. Just before the PCs leave, Reynald explains the magic of the chest and his plan to have Baldwin open it at the exchange site.

Reynald will provide rations, mounts, weapons, and other common items as needed. The road to Utica crosses mountainous terrain. The DM may use the Wilderness Encounters Table (*RC,* page 95) if desired.

**Mule:** AC 7; HD 2; hp 14; MV 120′ (40′); #AT 1 kick or 1 bite; Dmg 1d4 or 1d3; Save Normal Man; ML 8; INT 2; AL N; RC 195.

## Utica

This small town survives by offering services to bandits as they move along the border. Few of the residents have any morals. The town is always starved for cash and supplies, and crime is a way of life for many.

The party must wait in Utica for one hour before they are contacted by the bandits. The PCs may take any precautions they wish, so long as they stay in town. There is little of interest in Utica: one inn, a smithy, a small adventurers' shop, numerous shacks, and about 40 sullen residents. Most common items and services are available, but not mounts, weapons, or armor (see *RC* pages 62-69 for prices).

In a town like this, the chest on the mule will draw attention. Five bandits (not connected with the ones who have kidnapped Baldwin) desperate for money will try to steal the chest. If the PCs are in a building, the bandit leader and the two fighters try to burst through a door, while the two thieves

sneak in through a window. If the PCs are outside, the bandits surround them and attack from all sides.

**Althling** (bandit leader): AC 5; F5; hp 22; MV 120′ (40′); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save F5; ML 11; AL C; S 16, I 11, W 10, D 10, C 12, Ch 13; XP 175; chain mail, bastard sword (used two handed), dagger, 2 gp.

**Fighters** (2): AC 6; F3; hp 20; MV 120′ (40′); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save F3; ML 9; AL C; S 14, I 11, W 12, D 10, C 14, Ch 10; XP 35; leather armor, medium shield, short sword, dagger, 3 sp.

**Thieves** (2): AC 5; T3; hp 10; MV 120′ (40′); #AT 2; Dmg by weapon type; Save T3; ML 7; AL C; S 10, I 11, W 10, D 17, C 14, Ch 12; OL 25, FT 20, RT 20, CW 89, MS 30, HS 20, PP 30, HN 40; XP 75; leather armor, short sword, dagger, 3 sp. The thieves use both their swords and daggers in melee (−4 to hit on second attack).

These bandits are desperate but not especially brave. They hope to steal the chest for fast and easy money. If three are slain, the others will flee. If they have a chance to grab the chest or lead away the mule that carries it, they will do so.

One of Thoros's bandits rides into Utica one hour after the attack to contact the PCs. If the PCs have lost the chest, the bandit angrily rides away. The PCs may try to follow him, but he is skilled at losing pursuers.

**Kerak** (bandit): AC 3; F4; hp 24; MV 120′ (40′); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save F4; ML 11; AL C; S 15, I 10, W 11, D 15, C 14, Ch 10; XP 75; chain mail, normal shield, long sword, dagger, long bow, 20 arrows, 10 gp, riding horse and tack. Skills: horseback riding, tracking, mountain stealth, quick draw.

The bandit's horse is an excellent runner with extraordinary endurance, giving him a +10% bonus for successful evasion (*RC*, page 99).

Kerak is a short, evil-tempered man who is devoted to Thoros and helps to plan the bandits' crimes. He has a habit of interrupting a conversation to interject snide comments.

If the PCs still have the chest, Kerak instructs them to follow him north to the exchange site (about two miles). He will not tell the party where he is going. The bandit rides at least 50′ ahead of the party and objects strongly if they crowd closer. If the PCs threaten Kerak, he reminds them that Baldwin is in the bandits' power and can be killed or sold into slavery at any time.

## The Exchange

The bandits have set up a secure site for the exchange in an ancient ruined fort. Two of the towers are rubble, one has partially collapsed, and the fourth is intact. The building on the north side of the courtyard has fallen down in several places. The walls are riddled with holes, and a crumbling well stands in a cleared space near the southeast corner of the building. The PCs should arrive near sunset, as long shadows fall across the fort.

Kerak tells the PCs to stop at the gate, then rides across the courtyard and tethers his horse by the building. Two of the bandits step through the door into the open. One is Thoros, a tall blond man with an obvious air of command. The other is Ademar, a short and surly man who is festooned with daggers.

The three bandits feign disinterest in the PCs and eye the chest greedily. Actually, they are sizing up the PCs in order to try an old kidnappers' trick on them. Thoros calls on a random PC to bring the chest to the center of the courtyard, leave it there, and return to the gate.

If the PCs comply, the bandits drag the chest into the building, only to sneak out through a hole in the back wall, taking Baldwin with them and leaving the PCs empty handed. The bandits' horses are tied beside the hole, and Baldwin is inside the building.

If the PCs refuse or ask to see the boy, Thoros grins and stops the trickery. Ademar steps back into the dark building and brings Baldwin out into the open.

Thoros demands that one PC bring the chest to the center of the courtyard (area 1). The others must stay at the gate. "A friend of mine is watching you from a safe place," Thoros remarks, pointing to the intact tower. "He'll be very angry if you try anything sneaky." The bandit leader takes a hard grip on Baldwin's arm and marches him to the designated spot.

Thoros's threat is a subtle bit of misdirection. The bandit Hattin is not in the intact tower, but is lying prone on the ruins of the second floor of the partially collapsed tower (area 2), 20′ above the ground. Hattin cannot be seen unless the PCs are able to see in the dark at that distance and say that they are looking at the second floor of the correct tower. There is a 25% chance to spot Hattin if they do this. The fifth bandit, Balian the thief, is crouched out of sight behind the well (area 3) listening for signs of trouble.

**Thoros:** AC 2; F7; hp 42; MV 120′ (40′); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save F7; ML 12; AL C; S 17, I 14, W 10, D 16, C 15, Ch 13; XP 450; chain mail, shield, long sword, dagger, 18 gp.

Thoros leads his band by force and fear. A strong, tall, and greedy man, he has always wanted to make his fortune in one big strike. Success has eluded him until now. Thoros hates to be cheated, and trickery drives him into a rage. Most of the time he is a devious, grinning, but merciless mercenary.

**Ademar:** AC 4; F4; hp 24; MV 120′ (40′); #AT 2; Dmg by weapon type; Save F4; ML 11; AL C; S 16, I 14, W 10, D 17, C 14, Ch 10; XP 75; scale mail, short sword, 16 daggers, 6 gp.

Ademar is a perpetually surly man who is happy only when killing with his prized daggers. He has no fewer than 16 blades on his person (two in each boot, two on each shoulder, and eight in a bandolier across his chest). In melee, he can use a dagger in his off hand (−4 to hit on second attack) but prefers to throw his blades from a distance (+2 to hit). Ademar is slow witted and rarely helps devise any of the bandits' plans.

**Hattin:** AC 4; F4; hp 26; MV 120′ (40′); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save F4; ML 10; AL N; S 13, I 13, W 10, D 18, C 13, Ch 8; XP 75; leather armor, light crossbow, 20 bolts, long sword, 9 gp.

Hattin is a true mercenary, caring little how his money is earned. However, he does not go out of his way to hurt people, unlike his chaotic-aligned comrades. Hattin is nominally Thoros's right-hand man, since he is fairly intelligent. When not planning crimes, Hattin is morose and taciturn. He is very self centered, caring little who lives or dies—including his fellow bandits.

**Balian:** AC 4; T5; hp 20; MV 120′ (40′); #AT 2; Dmg by weapon type; Save T5; ML 8; AL C; S 12, I 12, W 10, D 18, C 14, Ch 11; OL 35, FT 30, RT 30, CW 91, MS 40, HS 28, PP 40, HN 50; XP 275; leather armor, short sword, dagger, 6 gp; fights with both sword and dagger (−4 to hit on second attack).

Balian is a valued member of the group because of his thieving skills. He has no guilt in letting the others do the bulk of the fighting; it isn't his job. His

tasks are spying and infiltration. Balian is a quiet and diplomatic man, a result of living among stronger and more aggressive fighters.

Thoros has no plans to doublecross the PCs, so long as they do not cheat him. When the PC with the chest reaches the center of the courtyard, Thoros releases Baldwin and orders Balian to open the chest. As Balian fumbles with the magical lock, Thoros grows angrier by the minute. Sooner or later, the PC must tell Thoros that only Baldwin can open the chest. Thoros grins at that, appreciating Reynald's caution. When Baldwin grasps the lock, it automatically opens at his touch and stays open.

> Impatiently, Thoros pushes Baldwin aside and grasps the lid. With pure greed in his eyes, he pulls the lid open. Suddenly, the greed is replaced by puzzlement. Thoros stands abruptly, anger in every plane of his face. Livid with rage, Thoros kicks the chest over, spilling thousands of coins on the ground—coins made of worthless lead and iron! The treasure is fake! Reynald seems to have betrayed you and abandoned his son. Thoros shouts at you, "Where is the real money? What did you do with it? Thieves!!"

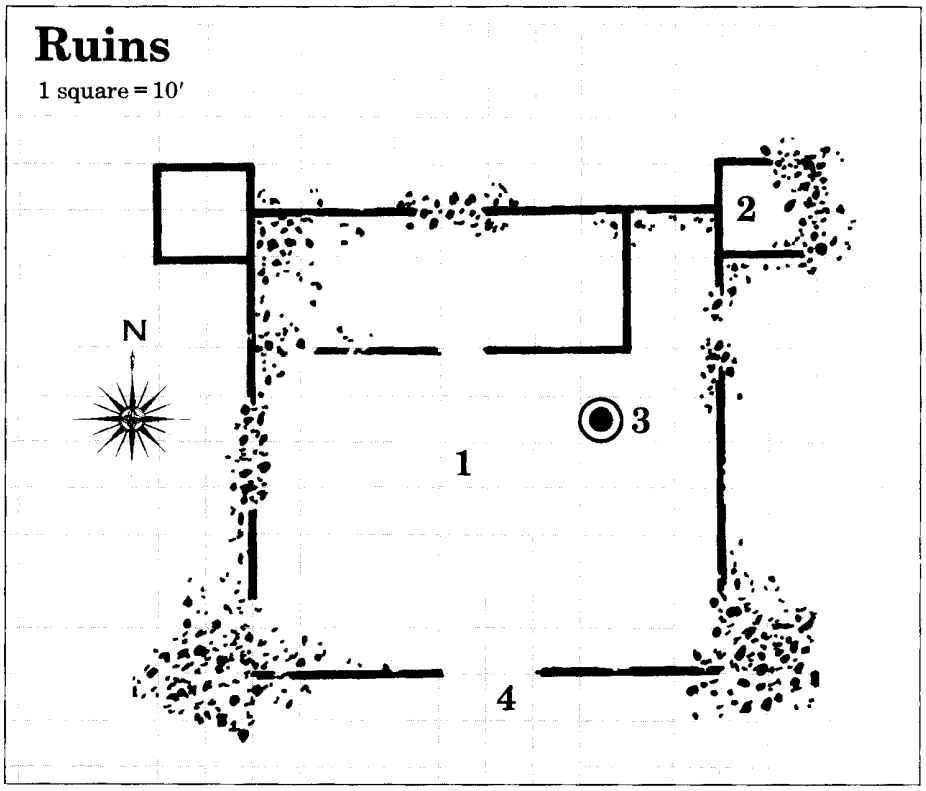
This was Reynald's plan from the beginning. While Antar thought he had failed to convince Reynald to abandon Baldwin, he actually turned the knight's mind to another plan. Reynald loaded the chest with phony coins, hoping to provoke a fight in which the bandits would be killed.

Regardless of what the PCs intend to do, Thoros draws his sword and attacks the nearest adventurer. Kerak rushes to aid Thoros. Hattin fires his crossbow at spell-casters, if he is able to identify them. The PCs can make an Intelligence check to see if they can determine where the bolts are coming from. Balian sneaks around the well to backstab a PC, then retreats. Ademar attempts to throw daggers from a distance until he runs out of blades. None of the bandits are stupid when it comes to combat.

Baldwin is in no immediate danger, since the bandits are intent on killing the PCs. However, the boy is frightened by the combat and flees out the gate to hide by the wall (area 4). His fate depends on who wins the fight.

The bandits are brave men. They fight savagely until Thoros is slain. If this happens, the rest fight only 2-5 rounds further. Then they flee out the nearest hole in the wall. Kerak, Balian, and Ademar run swiftly away in random directions. Hattin quietly exits the rear of the tower, hoping to get his horse and ride away. If cornered, he will fight fiercely to the end. Thoros fights to the death; rage and the need to stand tall in front of his followers prevent him from showing any weakness.

If any of the fleeing bandits pass Baldwin's hiding place, they try to recapture him; he still has value in the slave markets. The PCs may have to chase down a bandit and rescue Baldwin all over again.




## Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs bring Baldwin back alive, they will likely have a grudge against Reynald. He is prepared for this. Although mentally unstable, Reynald is not stupid. He realizes the consequences of placing the phony ransom in the chest: The lords of Karameikos would strip him of his title for such a wicked act. Thus, he has prepared phony "evidence" to implicate Antar for placing the fake ransom—something Antar definitely did not plan.

When he spots the returning PCs, Reynald has Antar chained, gagged, and thrown into the dungeon. Reynald explains that he discovered the plot too late to intercept the PCs, but that Antar will soon be executed for his crime. The PCs might still have their suspicions but will have to solve the mystery on their own.

If Baldwin is returned safely, the PCs will have made a friend for life. He is still a child, however, and won't believe that his father is guilty unless the PCs prove the truth to him. Because he never liked Antar, Baldwin will be all too ready to believe the advisor is guilty.

Reynald will not try to rid himself of Baldwin again. He may, however, make one of his younger sons his official heir. This could lead to conflict when Baldwin comes of age. As far as the PCs are concerned, Baldwin is safe for the time being. Ω

# LEGACY OF THE LIOSALFAR

BY CHRIS HIND

## A village's only hope of survival now lies on another world

Artwork by Marco Aldala

*Chris writes: "I presently pursue a B.A. in English and History at the University of Toronto. For its inspiration, 'Legacy of the Liosalfar' owes—believe it or not—a debt to an episode of 'Little House on the Prairie.' For playtesting and advice, I owe thanks to Andrew (elf) Hind and Stephen (18/00 Str) Elliott."*

This AD&D® adventure is for 2-4 player characters just beginning their adventuring careers (1st-level characters). A smaller group of experienced adventurers (for example, two 2nd-level characters or one 4th-level PC) should still find the challenges and rewards worthwhile. The party should include a wizard and at least one wilderness-oriented character, like a ranger or druid. A wide range of nonweapon proficiencies (tracking in particular) will be useful.

The setting is very generic. All that's required is an agricultural village (here called Rillford), a town, and a stretch of mysterious woods (the Dark Forest) between the two. This combination of geography can be found in practically every game world. Another element of the plot requires folk tales of an ancient faerie civilization that once flourished in the area.

"Faerie" refers to any number of magical creatures, including elves, sprites, and mud-men; it is a term that characters in the game world might use when referring to the unknown, not a rule-related grouping of monsters. The Liosalfar (light elves) are good-aligned faeries. The Dockalfar (dark elves) are evil faeries, not necessarily drow.

The section "For the Player Characters" assumes that the PCs grew up together in the farming village of Rillford. The adventure hook requires that they have a strong interest in the well-being of this village (more experienced PCs may be returning home to aid family and friends). If this not the case, the DM should take a few moments to modify the introduction, keeping in mind that these villagers cannot afford mercenaries. Perhaps, the local lord hires the PCs as bounty hunters and tax collectors and assigns them the task of finding the missing miller. He has two reasons: First, the miller is a serf, and thus the property of his lord. Second, the lord suspects the miller of withholding taxes but cannot collect because the money is well hidden.

## For the Player Characters

Dawn, moments before cock's crow. Standing just outside the village, you view the communal fields under a lightening sky. The west field lies fallow; the east field lies ruined. Where a blanket of golden wheat should be shivering in the cool spring breeze, the bent and broken stalks lie flattened against the ground.

Ten days ago, hail the size of slingstones fell from the sky, destroying your winter crop. Less damage would have been caused by an army of giants tramping though the field. The situation looks grim but, by tightening belts and apron strings, everyone should survive until autumn. Life after then relies on the spring planting and its future autumn harvest.

But after your lord's tithes, hardly enough grain remains for bread, never mind planting. So Werthan, the local miller, traveled to town with the village's collective savings to buy grain for the spring planting. He was due back a week ago.

Some suggest that Werthan fled with the money, but those close to him know that he is not a thief even if he is a miser. In any case, he certainly would not have left his wife and children behind. Others think that night creatures devoured him during the recent full moon. Earlier searches were hardly exhaustive. The entire village is too busy salvaging the remaining wheat so you can survive until the next harvest, and no one is willing to venture into the Dark Forest because everyone knows that it's haunted by spirits.

Now you have decided to take up the search, to prove to your families and to yourselves that you are cut from the cloth of heroes. Gathered outside Rillford, you check your equipment one last time before starting out. You hope that this first adventure will lead to even more profitable endeavors. But your personal hopes must wait, since the current mission will determine whether the entire village of Rillford has any future after this fall.

## For The DUNGEON MASTER™

The tale really begins many centuries before, when faeries ruled the mortal world as well as the Faerie Realm. Their civilization, renowned for architectural wonders and just administration, brought an age of peace in which high culture could flourish. But even magical creatures are not immune to temptation. Certain faeries fell to evil and wished to gain power over their fellows. Thus hubris started the Faerie War, pitting the Liosalfar (light elves) against the Dockalfar (dark elves).

The Liosalfar ultimately triumphed, forever banishing their evil brothers and sisters to the mortal world. With their civilization in the mortal world all but destroyed, most of the Liosalfar returned to the Faerie Realm to live in peace. Occasionally, however, a Liosalfar procession enters the mortal world on nights of the new moon so they may investigate the development of their old lands and keep the Dockalfar in check.

Returning from town, Werthan the miller happened upon one such troupe of Liosalfar. He followed their enchanting procession into the Dark Forest, through a magical faerie ring, and into the Faerie Realm. He is currently feasting with the faeries and has forgotten the life that awaits him in the mortal world.

### Beginning the Search

During character generation, encourage the players to "spend" all but one or two gold pieces on equipment. The player characters will not actually purchase equipment, but gather it from the cellars and attics around town. This offers a good opportunity for role-playing, as the PCs cajole their neighbors into loaning precious equipment to the cause. (Consider the gold as "purchasing points," the purpose of which is to ensure game balance. After all, the plot makes little sense with an impoverished Rillford but wealthy PCs; more than 10 gp is a treasure hoard to the average peasant.)

Once the adventurers are prepared, they will likely search for Werthan along the road between Rillford and town. This—the correct course of investigation—is fully described in "The High Way." What if the PCs miss the clues and end up in town (24 miles north, a long day's hike)? Here they can ask around for information on Werthan, to determine if he made it this far. The watchmen at the South Gate are unlikely to remember one face from the multitude of travelers coming and going each day. However, the grain merchant (one of three in town) who dealt with the miller can find an entry in his ledger that confirms that one "Werthan of Rillford bought 15 bushels of wheat," dated eight days before. This information should focus the search on the High Way.

## The High Way

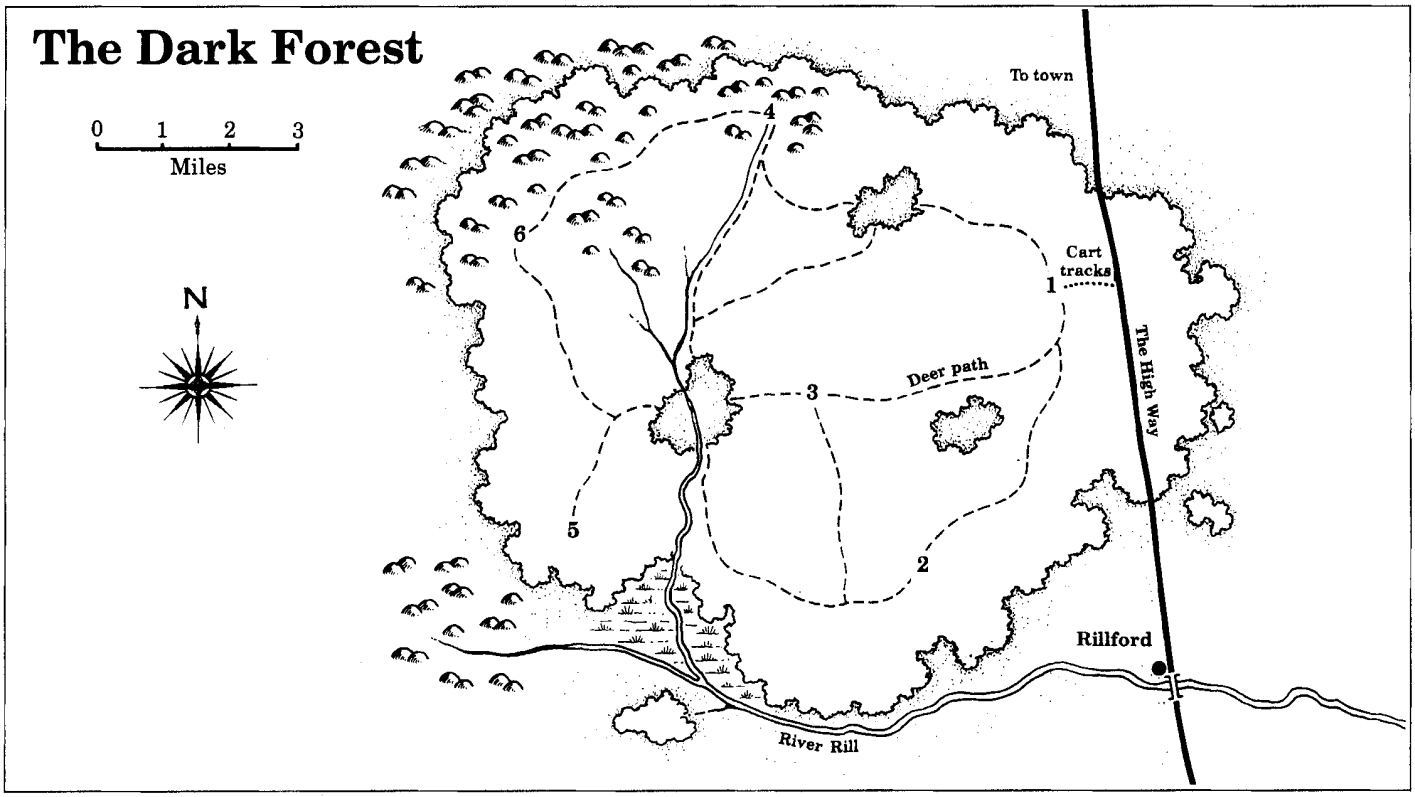
> Straight and level runs the cobblestone High Way, so called because it rises a yard above the surrounding land and appears ever higher because of its flanking ditches. The High Way has existed for as long as local memory recalls and will likely exist when Rillford is all but forgotten. Whatever long-dead civilization built this wonder, it has since fallen into disrepair. This is not a complete surprise, since many of the missing cobbles now form walls and chimneys in Rillford.

The High Way was built by the Liosalfar centuries ago. Despite its ruined condition, travelers can cover three miles per hour on the roadbed. The PCs should begin searching for the missing miller here, though simply walking along the road is not enough. Only by specifically searching for tracks on the side of the road and succeeding with a tracking roll will a PC detect (about 6-7 miles north of Rillford) faint hoofprints, footprints, and cart tracks leading into the Dark Forest (a dotted line on The Dark Forest map). The prints are 5-10 days old, and the PCs must make a second tracking roll to follow the trail. Werthan and his ox-cart made these tracks; the faeries and their steeds tread lightly and leave no marks of passage (and a pinch of the Faerie Queen's *dust of tracelessness* did no harm, either).

If the PCs fail to discover the tracks, the DM may wish to draw their attention to many dark birds circling in the sky to the west. Players (or their PCs, with an Intelligence check) may realize that these carrion birds deserve investigation. By following the tracks or approaching the circling birds, the party arrives at encounter area 1.

## The Dark Forest

When the PCs first enter the Dark Forest, read or paraphrase the following to the players:




The forest is dark and clearly very old, but in no way as sinister as some villagers would suggest. Well-spaced trees—huge oaks, maples, and a scattering of small pines and birch—and scant undergrowth allow sight to 30 yards. Dead leaves and twigs crackle under your feet, making silent movement difficult. Only mushrooms and the occasional lady's-slipper grow in the shadows.

Within the forest, the River Rill runs slow and shallow. Movement in miles per hour is as follows: though woods 1, on deer paths (dashed lines on the Dark Forest map) 2, in clearings 3. Except for the special encounters described below, only mundane creatures live in these woods. Pheasants, sparrows, rabbits, and squirrels are common. More threatening creatures are less often encountered; refer to the "Dark Forest Encounters" sidebar.

**1. Ravenous Ravens.**

Ahead, you hear a loud cawing and catch the scent of carrion. A shoulder of stone juts out of the earth, creating a clearing where only moss and raspberry brambles grow. A dozen ravens flap about, apparently fighting over something. They quit their squabbling to deal with your intrusion. One large raven, with a wingspan of about 4', hops forward and croaks "be-gawwwn."

This large raven is evil and intelligent, and is trying to tell the PCs to "be gone." It has a limited vocabulary—much of it curses—with which it communicates the flock's desires. Unless the party leaves the clearing or appeases the ravens with gifts (what the large one calls "gleee-tors," any shiny object), two birds attack each PC, pecking for the eyes. With wings flapping in their faces, spell-casters lose their concentration whether struck in combat or not. The flock takes to the sky if half their number are killed but will return in a few minutes, more vicious than before.

**Ordinary ravens** (12): INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 1, fly 36; HD 1-2 hp; hp 2 (×5), 1 (×7); THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA 10% chance to peck an eye; SD never surprised during lighted conditions; SZ S; ML 8; XP 15; MC5.

**Huge raven:** INT semi; AL N(E); AC 6; MV 1, fly 27; HD 1 – 1; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; SA as above; SD as above; SZ M; ML 11; XP 35; MC5.

This raven has one bent copper piece and a small chunk of blue quartz (worth 5 gp) woven into the lining of its nest. The PCs are unlikely to stumble upon the ravens' nests—which the DM may locate anywhere on the Dark Forest map—but can learn the location though force, guile, or by following the flock *invisibly*.

The half-eaten carcass of the miller's ox lies in the clearing. Werthan tied it to a fallen tree when he passed through. Since then, wolves killed it, ate their fill, and left the rest to scavengers. The overturned cart lies in a depression on the far side of the clearing. One wheel is broken. The ravens have eaten most of the precious grain. The remainder has rotted and is not worth salvaging, so the party should set themselves to finding Werthan.

Two deer paths lead out of this clearing, but the miller's trail ends here.

**2. The Weaver and the Web.**

Coarse webbing stretches across the path, anchored to trees and the forest floor. It covers about 30 square feet, so you may go around without much difficulty. Birds and squirrels cling to the web, some partially wrapped in sticky silk, some shriveled or decomposed. The undisturbed strands may indicate that Werthan did not come this way. Then again, spiders repair their webs quite rapidly.

A giant spider lurks in the branches above the web. This is Spithrax, an intelligent giant spider with the dark faerie blood of the Dockalfar. She hates mortals almost as much as she does the Liosalfar. Used to preying on small animals, she is cowardly at heart but will defend her home with any means possible: trickery, combat, even pleading. She has not seen Werthan.

**Spithrax** (giant spider): INT low; AL CE; AC 4; MV 3, web 12; HD 4+4; hp 16; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA poison; SZ L; ML 13; XP 650; MC1. Spithrax's poison is different from that of most giant spiders, causing paralysis for 2d6 hours on a failed saving throw.

A successful Intelligence check (on 1d20) reveals a man-sized pod in the midst of the webs. The webbing is stronger than its thin threads would suggest, requiring cutting or Strength checks to break through (see *MC1* for specifics). The web can also be set on fire, although it burns slowly and produces much foul smoke.

The pod does not contain Werthan, but a second giant spider and hundreds of eggs. Spithrax paralyzed her mate to provide food for her brood once they hatch. If Spithrax's children do hatch, they will overrun the Dark Forest.

If the webs are completely destroyed, the PCs may (1-in-6 chance) discover a silver pendant worth 10 gp hanging from a branch.

**3. Glamour and Gossamer.**

You emerge from the Dark Forest into a pleasant glade roughly 30 yards across. The rolling earth is concealed by a light-green wave of wild grasses and colored by clumps of pussy willow, dogtooth violets, yellow wood sorrel, and dark-green sprouts of fiddle-head fern. The bright sunlight is a refreshing change from the shaded woods. You imagine lying on the cool grass with the sunlight warming your face. The long hike has been tiring, and you could use a nice, relaxing nap.

This glade is home to six sprites, the few Liosalfar who remained behind when their brethren returned to the Faerie Realm. Normally mischievous and frolicking, their demeanor changes once strangers approach their glade. They are wary of the "Big People" and have turned *invisible* to watch what the PCs do.

**Sprites** (6): INT very; AL N(G); AC 6; MV 9, fly 18 (B); HD 1; hp 6, 5 (×2), 3 (×2), 1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4 (sword) or 1-3 (war arrow); SA arrows cause sleep for 1-6 hours if a save vs. poison is failed; SD become *invisible* at will, *detect good/evil* within 50 yards; SZ S; ML 11; MC1.

As well as their regular war arrows, these faeries also have special shafts for use against animals and creatures of good alignment. These humane arrows inflict no damage but cause sleep for 1-6 hours on a failed saving throw vs. poison. Sensing the PCs' goodness with their power to *detect good/evil,* the sprites shoot this second type of arrow at the mortals until all of them have fallen asleep or fled the clearing. They then tie sleeping adventurers to the ground with giant spider thread (which they have taken from Spithrax; see encounter 2). In 10 minutes, they prod their captives awake:

You slowly wake from a sleep that was anything but refreshing. Your neck is stiff and numerous points of your body feel as if they'd been stung by insects. As you gain awareness, you realize that a 2'-tall person with butterfly wings is standing on your chest. He pricks your chin with a tiny sword. Despite his stern look—which he seems to be struggling to maintain—you cannot help but find the little man cute and the situation amusing . . . until you realize that you are firmly tied to the ground.

The spokesfaerie, Fei (rhymes with "high"), wants to know what brings strangers to the Dark Forest. The content

**Dark Forest Encounters**

For every hour the PCs spend in the Dark Forest during the day (or every half-hour at night), they encounter something on a result of 1-2 on 1d10. Roll 1d6 and consult the following list to determine the nature of the encounter.

1. **Black bear:** INT semi; AL N; AC 7; MV 12; HD 3+3; hp 18; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA hug; SZ M; ML 9; XP 175; MC1. When the PCs meet this hungry bear, it is tearing apart a rotten stump in search of ants. An offering of food (it will eat almost anything) will ensure safe passage. Any loud noise or sudden movement has a chance to scare the bear away (50%) or provoke an attack (50%). Black bears can climb trees.

2. **Deer** (1-4): INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 24; HD 3; hp 12 (×2), 11, 9; THAC0 17; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 1-3/1-3 or 2-8; SZ M; ML 7; XP 65; MC4 (Stag). The deer appear in this order: a buck, a hind, and one or two young. Their first reaction is to flee. If cornered, only the buck (which has antlers) will attack.

3. **Giant centipedes** (2-8): INT non; AL N; AC 9; MV 15; HD 2 hp; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg nil; SA poison; SZ T; ML 5; XP 35; MC1. These reddish-brown insects may fall upon PCs from low branches or be swarming over an animal carcass. Essentially mindless, they are unlikely to chase fleeing characters. They retreat in the face of open flame.

4. **Skunk** (1-3): INT animal; AL N; AC 8; MV 12; HD 1-2 hp; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA/SD squirt musk; SZ T; ML 5; XP 35; MC1. A startled skunk will squirt first and flee immediately after. In addition to the musk's other effects, squirted characters will find it impossible to surprise their opponents.

5. **Snake, nonpoisonous:** INT animal; AL N; AC 6; MV 15; HD 1+1; hp 4; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SZ S; ML 3; XP 35; MC1 (variation). A 4'-long black water-snake slithers over someone's foot. It is almost harmless, but the PCs will realize this only with a successful animal lore check.

6. **Wolf:** INT semi; AL N; AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 13; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; SZ S; ML 10; XP 65; MC1. This rogue was cast out of its pack. Alone, it has been unable to bring down food. Now it is starving and desperate. It attacks immediately but will flee if seriously wounded (to half its hit points).

and form of the answer determines what becomes of the PCs. Hostile remarks result in a second slumber and a rude awakening in a ditch by the High Way. Friendly and sincere answers are rewarded with freedom.

The sprites remember Werthan, though learning this information could prove frustrating since the faeries take nothing seriously. All the while, they flit about, looking into packs or pulling the PCs' hair. Role-play these creatures as children: curious, unpredictable, and hard to control. Patient PCs eventually learn that Werthan passed by not long ago (since sprites are immortal, a week seems like very little time to them) following the Liosalfar procession. They took the eastern path.

The sprites live in a burrow under a grass-covered mound. A miniature door, partially hidden by shrubs, is one of many entrances, but only a crawling halfling or magically shrunken PC could gain access. Their treasure consists of 1,000 gp, which is actually 1,000 cp transformed by a *fool's gold* spell.

**4. The Men in the Mud.** The path leaves the forest where a spring gurgles down from the hills. The sparking water gathers in a muddy pool before continuing as a stream. The trail continues on the other side of the knee-deep pool. The spring water is enchanted and affects its container in different ways. Living creatures who drink from the spring are healed of 2d4 + 2 hp damage. Waterskins magically expand to five times their normal size (but the water loses its healing property).

If a PC steps into the pool, either to drink from the spring or get to the other path, three enchanted guardians form from the mud. They are not particularly hostile, but they dislike being stepped on and prefer that the PCs go around.

The mud-men are squat, man-shaped faeries given physical form by the enchanted waters. They can sense, and thus attack, only those creatures that stand in the pool. They sink back into the muck as soon as the PCs step out of the water. Mud-men immediately regain all lost hit points when in their dormant state; destroyed mud-men are "reborn" by the magical waters in 24 hours.

**Mud-men** (3): INT non; AL N; AC 10; MV 3; HD 2; hp 12, 7, 4; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg special; SA mud-throwing, suffocation; SD harmed only by magical weapons, immune to poison and mind-affecting spells; SZ S; ML special; XP 175; MC1.

**5. White Ruins.**

> Gnarled trees and brambles have overrun what was once a beautiful marble tower. With its walls battered by the centuries and covered by moss, the tower's former glory is difficult to imagine. The gate is closed, the drawbridge up. The 20'-wide moat is flooded with black stagnant water.

To get inside the tower, the party must first cross the moat (which is 6'-10' deep) by raft, rope, or swimming proficiency (no roll required). Then an entrance must be found. The chain that holds up the drawbridge is rusted through and will snap if 150 lbs. of pressure is applied. Similarly, the bar securing the gate is rotted and worm-eaten; an open-doors roll will open it. Otherwise, someone can climb the outside wall (a rough, dry surface; see page 123 of the *Player's Handbook*) and enter via an arrow slit (halflings only, please) or the trapdoor on the roof, which is rotted through and easily opened. Of course, spells may be used to similar effect.

No maps for this structure are included or needed. The circular tower is 50' in diameter and 60' high. It has four floors: ground level kitchen/storage, second-floor main hall, third-floor sleeping quarters, and rooftop parapet. With few interior walls, each level is essentially one huge room. A stone spiral staircase connects the floors. Most of the structure is sound, but the dark and cold interior show signs of being home for small animals. Any furnishings that once existed have rotted away.

On the ground floor, a portion of the ceiling has fallen and cracked the floor tiles, allowing PCs to spot a normally invisible trapdoor after a successful search (on 1d6, a roll of 1 or 2 for elves and half-elves, a roll of 1 for other races). After removing the rubble, the PCs find a staircase:

> The narrow steps lead down to a small room, perhaps 10' square. In the center of the room, a block of white marble supports a dust-covered crystal coffin. Wiping the grime away from the lid, you see that the coffin holds a figure in fine chain mail. The figure—male or female, it is difficult to tell because of the closed visor—is slim but would stand well over 6' tall. A sword and bundle of javelins flank the figure. The shield bears the device of a silver sickle-moon on a blue field.

The coffin is fully described in "The Crystal Coffin" sidebar. A PC who succeeds in a heraldry or ancient history proficiency check recognizes the shield's device as belonging to a legendary line of faerie-folk.

The sleeping figure is a high elf named Galahorn. His appearance is regal: 6'3" tall, thin (145 lbs.), with flawless olive skin, chestnut hair, and dark eyes. While this is his natural form, he often looks completely different since he is a master of deception.

Galahorn is one of the Dockalfar. He hates all good faeries and is dedicated to destroying them. He was once a warrior but has changed tactics since fighting on the losing side of the Faerie War. Now lies and deception are his sword and shield. Almost everything he says is an elaborate falsehood, yet he is never caught contradicting himself.

After the Faerie War, Galahorn learned through a Dockalfar seer that the faeries would eventually be replaced

### The Crystal Coffin

The coffin is 7' long, 3' wide, and 2' deep. The sides and top are constructed of etched crystal, and the bottom consists of a hammered-brass plate. The fittings and hinges are also brass. While the materials themselves are worth at least 1,000 gp, the coffin weighs 200 lbs. and is bulky enough to require four bearers (at the moment, it also belong to Galahorn).

Under scrutiny of a *detect magic* spell, the coffin radiates moderate enchantment. In fact, this magical item was created a 12th-level Dockalfar necromancer and is more durable than it appears (it saves at +6 on the Item Saving Throws table, page 39 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Any creature lying inside the closed coffin falls under the influence of a powerful *feign death* spell. In addition to the normal effects of this spell, the coffin halts aging. The spell ends when the lid is raised by some external force; the "sleeper" cannot wake until then.

XP Value: 1,000

by the new race of man as masters of the mortal world. He decided to sleep until the time when he could deceive the humans into waging war against the Liosalfar.

Galahorn thinks that chivalry is foolish, yet he dresses like a knight. Opponents who let down their guard rarely live long enough to realize that his arms and armor are part of the deception. Although he prefers subtlety, he is still a skilled warrior, not bound by honor. Being long lived, he has had many years to strengthen his ego and is overconfident of his abilities.

**Galahorn the Deceiver** (high elf): AL CE; AC 4; MV 12; F5/M5; hp 23; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 14, D 13, C 13, I 15, W 10, Ch 16; ML 13; XP 1,400; elven chain mail, shield, long sword, three javelins.

Spells: *change self* (×4); *blur, invisibility; delude* (cast). Galahorn does not have a spell book, but the spells *change self, charm person, read magic, blur, invisibility,* and *delude* are permanently inscribed on the back of his shield.

Nonweapon proficiencies: ancient history, heraldry, land-based riding, reading/writing (elvish).

Before his feigned death, Galahorn cast a *delude* spell to assume lawful-good alignment. As soon as the coffin is opened, he awakes and sets about deceiving the PCs. He speaks elvish (a language that has not changed much over the centuries) and an archaic form of Common (comparable to the language of Shakespeare's time).

Galahorn claims to be one of the Liosalfar who, after the Faerie War, remained in the mortal world while banishing the evil Dockalfar to another realm. If the PCs mention Werthan, Galahorn says that the Dockalfar can occasionally cross into this world during nights of the full moon to take humans for sacrifices. He offers to help the PCs against the evil faeries but claims he cannot cross into the evil realm himself.

During the conversation, Galahorn learns all he can about the PCs and about Werthan. The DM should quickly jot down what Galahorn learns, since a later encounter may require these specifics.

The truth, of course, is the exact opposite of what Galahorn tells the PCs (see "For the Dungeon Master"). The DM should use Galahorn to make the PCs unsure of just whom to trust. He succeeds in his own evil agenda if he tricks the PCs into attacking the Liosalfar. He offers to lead the PCs to the faerie ring (area 6) and show them through it. He will not, and cannot, cross through himself. As a final parting, Galahorn warns that the Dockalfar are masters of deception and that the PCs should not trust everything they see.

**6. Faerie Ring.**

> One hill distinguishes itself from the rest by its greater size and unnaturally domed shape. No trees grow on this hill, although the surrounding woods provide shade. The top of the hill is ringed by large red mushrooms.

The mushrooms are edible but possess no special nutritional or magical effect. They will grow back within a day of being picked. The ring will never lose its shape, since only a limited number of mushrooms grow there at any one time. The circle of mushrooms is actually a faerie ring, a magical door between the mortal world and the Faerie Realm.

A PC who steps into the ring sees his companions vanish, while those on the outside think that the PC who stepped into the ring was the one to disappear. If all the PCs step into the faerie ring at roughly the same time, they may not realize at first that they have traveled between worlds. Only good-aligned creatures can cross the faerie ring. Evil creatures can step into it, but nothing happens.

Read or paraphrase the following as soon as the PCs step into the faerie ring:

> You step into the ring of red mushrooms . . . and nothing happens. At least, you don't think so. The ring does not appear any different, nor does the grassy mound. The sky is dark now, but you're unsure how long it has been so. What was the time when you stepped through the Ring? Did nightfall actually pass unnoticed? A new moon visibly glides across the heavens, shining brightly through the treetops. Much larger than you have ever seen, the thin crescent illuminates the scene surprisingly well.

In faerie moonlight, all diurnal creatures suffer a −1 penalty to their attack and saving-throw rolls. The blind-fighting proficiency negates this penalty.

## The Faerie Realm

The PCs have entered the Faerie Realm, an alternate Prime Material plane. It is innately magical, so *detect magic* spells may not discern minor enchantments amid the Realm's overall aura of alteration magic. In the Faerie Realm, anything can happen. These few notes concerning what PCs may find in this enchanted land are really only guides for the DM's imagination. If the DM wants some event to occur, it does, with little need for explanation!

Only good creatures inhabit the Faerie Realm. The evil ones were killed or banished to the mortal world long ago. Intelligent animals (such as white stags and blue boars) and benign monsters (such as unicorns) are a few examples of native fauna. Good faeries of all types also live here, including many gray elves. The trees of the Faerie Realm are taller and more symmetrical than mundane trees, and their leaves change to many more colors than red, orange and yellow in the autumn. One hour in the Faerie Realm is equivalent to one day (24 hours) in the world of mortals.

The Faerie Realm cannot be mapped; the land continuously shifts and changes. Mortal visitors are bound to become lost more than once (if given directions, PCs can find their way after a successful direction sense proficiency check). Use the encounters outlined below—in any order, at any time—to keep the adventurers on track.

**A. Liosalfar Hunt.**

> You wander through the moonlit woods, lost and unsure of your direction. You hear a shout and the sound of snapping twigs as a tawny blur bounds from the dense foliage and crashes into your midst. The stag's eyes are wide with fear, and an arrow protrudes from one flank. The twang of bowstrings and the whistle of arrows comes from the edge of the forest.

The stag is one of the normal, nonintelligent kinds. It is concerned only with escape and may gore or trample anyone in the way. In almost the same instant, two arrows streak onto the scene, each with a 45% chance of bringing down the stag, a 10% chance of striking a random character, and a 45% chance of missing altogether.

**Stag:** INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 24; HD 3; hp 15 (currently 10); THAC0

17; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 2-8 or 1-3/1-3; SZ L; ML 7; XP 65; MC4.

In a few moments, two Liosalfar riders break through the tangles. These gray elves are tall and fair, extremely handsome even in dull-colored riding clothes.

If the stag was not hit by either of the final two arrows, it flees into the forest. The Liosalfar give chase, perhaps riding down the PCs in their excitement (DM's discretion). If the stag is dead (by a Liosalfar arrow or PCs with lethal methods of self-defense), the riders stop to collect their prize. The adventurers may talk with the riders if they wish.

The Liosalfar have not seen Werthan, since they have been hunting all day, but they can give directions to the nearest faerie hall (remember that, though the directions are accurate, nonfaeries may still get lost in the Faerie Realm, giving the DM a perfect opportunity to present other encounters). If the encounter is a friendly one, the Liosalfar use their healing proficiencies to treat any wounds the PCs may have suffered by antler or arrow.

**Liosalfar riders** (gray elves): INT high; AL CG; AC 10; MV 10; HD 1+1; hp 6, 5; THAC0 19 (18 with sword or bow); #AT 1 or 2 (bow); Dmg by weapon type; SA +1 to hit with sword and bow; SD opponents' surprise rolls at −5; MR 90% resistance to *sleep* and *charm*-related spells; SZ M; ML 13; MC1; knife, short bow, 12 arrows, velvet pouch with 1-6 ep.

**Horses, riding:** INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 24; HD 3; hp 11 each; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1-2/1-2; SZ L; ML 7; MC1.

**B. The Silent Wood-Nymph.** Quietly moving characters see the following:

> A beautiful woman dances in the moonlight. She has smooth, pale skin, green hair, and yellow eyes. She appears to be singing, but only the whispering of the wind through the trees is audible. A shimmering birch tree keeps rhythm with her.

This woman is a dryad (wood-nymph) named Silva. The birch is her life-tree, and she must remain within 360 yards of it. Talking with Silva could prove problematic. First, she deals only with peaceful people and flees if threatened, using her *dimension door* spell to good effect. If her life-tree is in danger, she *charms* the more powerful opponents so they may defend her. Second, she is mute and can only *speak with plants.* While understanding the dryad, elf, pixie, and sprite languages well enough, she can communicate only though gestures. The DM should play this out this interchange to the fullest, like a game of charades.

Silva has heard that the Liosalfar are holding a great banquet on behalf of a guest and can point the PCs in the right direction (again, PCs may still get lost). However, she has one condition. Being tied to her tree, she is sometimes very lonely, especially when the other faeries are gathered at banquets. Therefore, she asks that the best-looking male character stay behind with her until the quest is finished. This should be a fair exchange, and by no means an unpleasant experience for the chosen PC.

If the PCs agree, the DM is faced with a problem: What does the player of the chosen PC do while the others are investigating? One solution is for him to play Lumkin, the gnome from encounter C below. The DM should take the player aside, provide him with Lumkin's statistics, personality, and riddle, and let the player go at it. If he role-plays well, award a few extra experience points.

**Silva** (dryad): INT high; AL N; AC 9; MV 12; HD 2; hp 8; THAC0 19; #AT nil; Dmg nil; SA *charm* three times/day; SD *dimension door* through trees; MR 50%; SZ M; ML 7; MC2.

Silva's treasure, 200 gp and 10 semiprecious gems, is hidden within her tree and should be very hard for PCs to get at.

**C. The Riddle-master.**

> A burbling stream meanders through the woods. This might be a good place to rest and get your bearings, but you begin to feel that you are not alone. This feeling intensifies when you hear mumbling from above. Looking up, you are startled to see a face hanging from a tree, its considerable nose just inches from your own. The face seems equally startled, for it suddenly plummets past you, followed closely by a small body. With a crash, a little man lands in the leaves at your feet.

This gnome has had the wind knocked out of him but is otherwise uninjured by his fall. His name is Lumkin, and his self-granted title is Master of Riddles. He entertains the Liosalfar with riddles of his own design and ones he gathers. Lumkin ran out of standard faerie riddles long ago and now spends a great deal of time in the mortal world learning new ones. Since faeries' minds work differently than mortals', even the simplest human riddle offers some challenge to the Liosalfar.

However, the Liosalfar's mortal guest has disrupted Lumkin's riddle contests. Werthan's slow (but mortal) mind easily figures out all of Lumkin's riddles. The frustrated gnome came to his favorite thinking spot to invent a clever and original riddle that he hopes will stump both faerie and mortal! Hanging upside-down from a tree is not particularly dangerous unless startled by ugly humans.

After he catches his breath and brushes the leaves off his clothes, Lumkin will happily talk with the PCs. He listens eagerly to any riddles the PCs might know. If the DM doesn't know the answer to one of the PCs' riddles, neither does Lumkin. If the DM does know the answer (quite likely, since most PCs won't be able to spontaneously think up an original riddle) Lumkin still has a 20% chance of answering incorrectly.

Lumkin thinks he has just finished the ultimate riddle. He knows how faeries think and believes his riddle will stump them, but he wants to test it on mortals. If asked where to find Werthan, Lumkin offers directions only after the PCs attempt to guess his riddle. They don't have to answer correctly, so long as they try. Werthan stops after each stanza to give everyone a guess. If no one answers correctly, he recites the next stanza.

I am one of four, equal we are.
My face ever changes, as does my mood.
Both are out of my hands, yet regular
And predictable to even the crude.
My nature makes me both worshiped and cursed,
Though those wishing to live put worship first.

Once, clad in armor of reflective blue,
I battled my ancient enemy's host.
At length, Mulciber's sword ran me through.
Quenched of life, my essence rose like a ghost,
But since immortals can never be slain,
I fell from the heavens, whole once again.

At times, I am the bane of mortal folk
When, with a cold, cruel, heart, I cannot weep.
A pale rogue, I hide goods with my cloak
Or bury you in a grave as you sleep.
My cruelty is finite; in any case,
Spring love melts my heart and cracks my grim face.

Most often I am a friend to mankind,
Carrying mercantile goods on my back,
Or helping a miller with flour to grind.
I even guide travelers lacking a track.
Bringer of life or deadly afflictions,
I am a creature of contradictions.

The correct answer is "water." Lumkin keeps his word, whether the PCs answer correctly or give up. Still, he is unable to resist giving a cryptic answer: "This riddle is also my answer, if you follow my meaning" (i.e., follow the river). If the PCs have glazed looks in their eyes, Lumkin says: "Hmmm . . . mortals can be so slow sometimes. I'm telling you, quite simply, to FOLLOW THE RIVER and you'll find the tower where your friend is staying." The walk to the Liosalfar tower (encounter D) takes 10 minutes, crooked as the river runs.

**Lumkin** (gnome): INT very; AL NG; AC 10; MV 6; HD 1; hp 4; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; MR special; SZ S; ML 12; MC1; short sword, dagger, sling, 3 round pebbles, 3-10 gp agates, 25 gp, and 10 silver buttons worth 10 gp each.

**D. The Revelry.**

> The distant sound of revelry floats through the quiet night. By following the noise, you eventually come upon a large marble tower. Warm light fans through the windows and the open gate. A wonderful aroma of cooking wafts to your noses. As you approach, you hear musical voices laughing and singing.

Allow the PCs to plan their next move and take any precautions they wish. If they want to enter the tower (and they should), continue:

> You approach the tower seemingly undetected, but once you cross the threshold the revelry suddenly stops. The first floor of the tower is a great hall with three long tables surrounding a central firepit. The tables are laden with a great feast: roast venison, fowl and mutton, loaves of honeyed bread, exotic fruit and cheese, and great flagons of wine. The eating utensils are silver, the plates gold. Colorful tapestries cover the walls. The sole occupant of the room is a slightly drunken human, looking around with bewilderment on his red face. "Where'd everybody go?" he asks. Then he burps, appears shocked at his own rudeness, and begins to laugh uncontrollably.

At 5'5" and 150 lbs., Werthan is stout and thick skinned. Despite 35 years of hard work, he appears to be in his early twenties due to his elvish ancestry (see below). Though a little slow (or perhaps because of it), he has always been fascinated by faerie tales. As a youth, this compelling interest was the catalyst for many fights until Werthan established himself as a scrapper. He often slipped away into the forest so he could peacefully dream of faeries, a trick he still uses when visited by irritating people.

Werthan is known in Rillford as a miser, a reputation very much based on fact. However, while he guards his own wealth, he is not greedy for that of others. Strangely, this compulsive penny-pinching is quite unlike another side of his personality that has a taste for exotic foods and wild parties, especially when someone else is paying. He keeps a cache of 127 gp in his cellar but insists to the tax collector that he is down to his last silver piece.

Werthan's personality is shaped a great deal by his ancestry. Somewhere in the past, faerie blood mixed with his line; animals and faeries quickly grow to trust him. Until recently, he had never seen a faerie but believed in his heart that they existed. Stumbling upon the Liosalfar was like a dream come true.

**Werthan:** AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 15, D 10, C 14, I 8, W 9, Ch 11; ML 9; knife, purse containing 13 sp. Proficiencies: animal handling, mill operation, swimming.

The PCs' challenge is to persuade Werthan to come home to his wife and children. "But I just got here," he insists. Indeed, because of the way time flows in the faerie worlds, Werthan has been feasting for only a day. Besides, he likes it here with the Liosalfar. He can eat and drink all he likes, learn about faeries, and live without fear of hostile animals (or tax collectors!). The Liosalfar, in turn, are rather amused with their mortal friend and will let him stay for as long as he likes or until they get tired of him.

Rather than rely on an arbitrary die roll, the DM should base Werthan's decision on the PCs' persuasive abilities. This is, after all, role-playing and not roll-playing. Unless the players have cotton in their mouths, the DM should lean in favor of Werthan agreeing to return.

The Liosalfar have been watching the PCs from the cover of a *mass invisibility* spell, in order to determine their intent. Once the PCs are finished with their oratory, a beautiful gray elf suddenly appears in their midst. Cystambula, the Faerie Queen, learned of Rillford's plight from Werthan. If the PCs have acted politely in the hall (for example, they did not smash the tables, pig-out on the food, pocket a goblet, or act violently with Werthan), she presents them with a small packet of magical grain. It is enough to sow one of Rillford's two fields (leaving the other fallow). Perfect wheat will grow despite any disaster that may occur. Flour made from the wheat will be particularly fine and can be used to make delicious, nourishing bread.

The Liosalfar then insist on guiding the PCs (and Werthan, if he has agreed to return home) back to the faerie ring and see them through it.

If the PCs are stupid or brutish (or confused) enough to fight the faeries, Cystambula uses powerful magic (such as *hold person, sleep,* or *fumble*) to overcome the PCs while 20 Liosalfar defend her. Once incapacitated, all mortals are dumped through the faerie ring (this includes Werthan, although he is treated more gently).

**Cystambula, the Faerie Queen** (gray elf): AL CG; AC 5; MV 12; M15; hp 39; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 6, D 16, C 10, I 17, W 14, Ch 18; ML 13; *dust of tracelessness, ring of protection +3.*

Spells: *audible glamer, color spray, dancing lights, Nystul's magical aura, sleep; glitterdust, invisibility, know alignment, Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter, whispering wind; hold person, invisibility 10' radius, protection from normal missiles, slow, suggestion; emotion, fumble, magic mirror, plant growth, rainbow pattern; animal growth, distance distortion, dream, fabricate, Leomund's lamentable belaborment; mass suggestion, true seeing.*

Proficiencies: astrology, dancing, etiquette, land-based riding, reading/writing (elvish), singing, spellcraft, weaving.

**Liosalfar** (20): hp 5 each; for complete statistics, see area A.

### The "Miller's" Tale

This encounter occurs only if the PCs previously woke Galahorn the Deceiver (area 5) *and* have persuaded Werthan to return home with them.

> Your group passes through the faerie ring, crossing back into the mortal world, and descends the mushroom-ringed hill. As you reach the bottom, you hear a familiar voice behind, shouting "Wait . . . help . . . don't leave me." A bruised and ragged man stumbles down the hill. Only when he nears do you recognize him as Werthan . . . or, at least, another Werthan!

This is actually Galahorn, playing a final trick. From concealment, he watched the group leave the faerie ring and used *change self* to take on Werthan's appearance (Galahorn's faerie version of this spell allows him to duplicate specific individuals). He then ran up the far side of the hill so he would appear to have crossed over from the Faerie Realm.

Galahorn claims he saw the party leave with a changeling (he points to the real Werthan). He managed to escape while the "evil faeries" were mocking the mortals' stupidity. He also claims that the evil faeries are not far behind, so that the best course of action would be to kill the changeling and flee at once.

Galahorn keeps his story vague and claims that any inconsistencies between his story and the PCs' own experiences were the work of faerie deception. The Deceiver also makes good use of any information he learned earlier from the PCs. Werthan is so stunned at seeing his double that he can offer nothing in his own defense.

Just before the PCs figure out who is who (if they ever do), four riders burst from the faerie ring and gallop toward the group. These faeries resemble 5'-tall wrinkled men with large, round eyes. They wear tall helms and green surcoats over golden chain mail. Each is armed with a short sword and a short bow. They ride small white horses.

These faeries were sent to capture or kill Galahorn after Cystambula divined with her *magic mirror* spell that he was once again causing trouble. Unfortunately, their appearance lends credibility to Galahorn's lies.

**Liosalfar** (4): AC 5; hp 9, 7, 4, 3; see area A for complete statistics.

The riders concentrate their attacks on Galahorn (their leader can see through the deception because of a *true seeing* spell cast by Cystambula) but will defend against attacks made by the PCs.

The PCs' difficult decision between defending or fighting the false Werthan is made easier by Galahorn's hatred of the Liosalfar. He wades into melee, using his little knife (the illusion that covers his sword) to tremendous effect. The real Werthan does nothing but stare in wonder at these strange events. The riders retreat through the faerie ring if one of them falls.

### Concluding the Adventure

A truly heroic end for the adventure is one in which the PCs return to Rillford with both Werthan and the Liosalfar's magical grain. If only Werthan returns, he goes into the cache in his cellar and retrieves enough money to buy more grain. Enough time remains before the end of planting season for another trip to town, but this time the PCs are sent along to ensure that the grain makes it back to Rillford.

If Werthan fails to return, his wife mourns for the rest of her life, and his children become troublemakers in adulthood. What might happen if Werthan stumbles out of the forest 20 years later, no older than when he disappeared (perhaps when the elves become bored with him, or Werthan yearns for his mortal life)?

Without grain to plant, many of the old and young villagers die of starvation in the coming year. A grim ending, but failure cannot be ignored lest the players think all adventures will turn out fine despite their efforts (or lack thereof).

If the PCs have proven themselves noble allies in the eyes of the Liosalfar, they gain a +1 modifier to the reaction rolls of these creatures in future encounters. If they fight the Liosalfar, good faeries will react negatively (−1 to their rolls) toward them for seven years (faerie memories are long). If the DM feels nasty, he may even use the death of a Liosalfar as the catalyst to start a mortal-faerie war! Ω

# THE PRICE OF REVENGE

BY STEVE KURTZ

"Revenge is a dish best served cold."

Vistani proverb

Artwork by Terry Dykstra

*Steve Kurtz is* still *in graduate school at Cornell University, where he labors to complete his research in orthopaedic biomechanics. His most recent projects for TSR's AL-QADIM™ setting include* A Dozen and One Adventures, City of Delights, *and* Ruined Kingdoms. The Price of Revenge *was inspired by January (the cruelest month) in Ithaca.*

"The Price of Revenge" is a AD&D® RAVENLOFT® adventure for 3-5 player characters of 4th-6th level (about 25 total levels). Because of the setting, a well-balanced party of good and neutral PCs is recommended. The party should begin the adventure owning mounts and at least one silver or magical weapon. A lawful-good priest, a paladin, or a character with the healing nonweapon proficiency would be useful.

Although not necessary, it would be helpful for the DM to look through the *Realm of Terror* book in the RAVENLOFT boxed set, which describes the nosferatu vampire. If it is not available, read the beginning of "Bane of the Shadowborn" in DUNGEON® Magazine #31, which gives a brief overview of the Demiplane of Dread. The DM may also want to read more about Ravenloft vampires in RR3 *Van Richten's Guide to Vampires.*

The module can fit in any ongoing campaign, though the smoothest transitions will be from mountainous regions. If the party is already in Ravenloft, the adventure begins when the PCs wander into the misty border surrounding the mainland.

## Adventure Background

Winter has fallen in Valachan, a mountainous domain in the south of Ravenloft, bringing with it a cold, sonorous wind and the legacy of a Vistani's revenge, prophesied 12 years ago. The setting is Ungrad, a small town of 1,500 people ensconced in one of Valachan's countless secluded valleys. A recent blizzard has piled the only road leading out of the valley in high, impassable drifts, and most of Ungrad's inhabitants have settled down to wait out the short but bitter winter.

Ungrad has always been a quiet, peaceful town, plagued only by outbreaks of White Fever, a disease endemic to Valachan. The oldest citizens still remember the Great Epidemic that accompanied the current mayor's arriv-

al 12 years ago. In grief and rage, some survivors began to blame the mayor, Felix Hoyer, accusing him of bringing a virulent strain of the disease with him to his new post. Amid the accusations, the mayor adopted stricter methods to contain the disease. People with the symptoms were quarantined, and in extreme cases, infected houses were burned down. These measures hardly increased the new mayor's popularity.

Even the Vistani, the mysterious gypsies that roam Ravenloft, were not immune to the disease. One of the Vistani victims was a young girl named Eliza. A dazzling beauty at 10, she had the wild, bewitching eyes and raven hair of her mother Awilda, a powerful seeress and fortune teller among the Vistani. Awilda was distraught over her child's death and publicly accused the mayor of Eliza's murder. After contracting the fever herself, Awilda fled north to a warmer climate.

To appease the citizens, Mayor Hoyer sent for a renowned physician, the calmly competent Dr. Antianetta Despini. Within a year of her arrival, the epidemic was stemmed. Perhaps to improve his standing in the community, the mayor offered to marry the heroic doctor. At first she refused, but his repeated entreaties finally won their way into her heart. They were married in a private ceremony, but at the public reception, Awilda returned to make a surprise appearance. Striding out of the crowd, she shouted at the mayor:

"For turning the life of my child into an abomination, I curse you! Beware the rose, Hoyer. It will be your undoing!"

Awilda then tossed a white rose onto the table in front of the groom and began to laugh hysterically. When Antianetta attempted to console the woman for her loss, Awilda turned and ran laughing into the night. Although other Vistani come and go from Ungrad, Awilda has never left the town. Some say the deranged woman is still waiting, after all these years, to gain her revenge.

## For the DUNGEON MASTER™

Ten years after Awilda pronounced her curse, the Mists bring the PCs to Ungrad. The party can return to their world (or leave Valachan, if the DM is running a Ravenloft campaign) only when they have satisfied Awilda's thirst for vengeance.

Ungrad is a town managed, quite effectively, by a pair of clever nosferatu vampires: Mayor Felix Hoyer and Dr. Antianetta Despini-Hoyer (see sidebar). These variants of the common vampire are described in the RAVENLOFT boxed set. No common vampires appear in this adventure, so all references to vampires refer to the nosferatu variety. A brief description is given here for DMs who do not have access to the boxed set.

Nosferatu vampires are undead that draw their nourishment from fresh blood, not life energy like a common vampire. For each round they drink the blood of a victim, they drain a point of Constitution (it takes at least one full day of bed rest to regain a lost point of Constitution). In addition, nosferatu vampires have the ability to telepathically *charm* a victim. A victim who fails a saving throw vs. spells at a −2 penalty will be subject to that particular vampire's suggestions for life (or until a *remove curse* spell is successfully cast). The vampire can issue telepathic commands to a victim, but the communication is one way. In most other respects, the nosferatu vampires share the strengths and weaknesses of common vampires.

The special abilities of Ravenloft vampires are highly individual. Aside from the above information, there is no definitive list of powers that holds true for all vampires.

The Domain of Valachan is ruled by the Panther Lord, Baron Urik von Kharkov, an ancient nosferatu vampire. More information about the baron appears in the boxed set, but he will not be encountered during the course of this adventure.

White Fever actually results from a vampire's feeding. The baron prefers to feast on a dozen victims rather than draining a single victim to death, and tries to instill this sense of responsibility in his slaves. In Felix Hoyer, he almost succeeded.

As one of the baron's trusted vassals, Felix Hoyer became a vampire over a century ago. When the human mayor in Ungrad began to speak seditiously about the baron, Hoyer was dispatched to make certain that the mayor died from White Fever. It was Hoyer's first independent mission, and he enjoyed it all too well.

As a reward for his service, Hoyer was appointed mayor of Ungrad. Free from the constant pressure of the baron's presence, he went on a killing spree. The citizens interpreted the deaths as an epidemic of White Fever. His ultimate snub at authority was to start preying on the Vistani, who typically enjoy the protection of Ravenloft's Mists and have alliances with many vampiric lords.

One night Hoyer captured Eliza, the daughter of the Vistani matriarch Awilda. Bestowing the Dark Gift on Eliza, Hoyer turned the girl into his vampire slave. Later, a group of Vistani under Awilda's direction succeeded in rescuing Eliza during the day, while Hoyer slumbered in his secret lair. This rescue was small consolation for the mother, for she knew of no cure for her daughter's vampirism.

What mother can order the destruction of her own daughter? Awilda released Eliza into the wilds of Valachan, where she roams to this day. After thwarting Hoyer's plans, Awilda barely escaped from Ungrad with her life. She traveled north to the permanent camp of Vistani at the base of Castle Ravenloft itself, to bring the news of this crime to the most powerful Vistani matriarch. By the time Awilda returned to Ungrad, the high matriarch had assured her that any curse pronounced on Hoyer would be fulfilled by the Land.

### The First Family of Ungrad

During the months of Awilda's absence, the baron learned of Hoyer's excesses and took decisive action to discipline Hoyer. He sent another, more disciplined vampire to Ungrad, a female doctor of some repute in combating White Fever. Antianetta Despini arrived in the secluded town and immediately began treating the victims of Hoyer's excesses, quickly earning the citizen's gratitude and respect. She also brought along a clear message to Hoyer: don't kill any more citizens, or face destruction at the hands of the ancient Baron Urik himself.

The idea of being sealed in an airtight chamber and slowly starved to death did not appeal to Felix, who quickly traveled to Castle Pantara and tried to repair the strained trust between himself and his sovereign lord. Baron Urik forgave his vassal, but on one condition: He must remain under constant supervision by a wiser and more discrete vampire. Dr. Despini seemed the likely choice, so a marriage between the

## Important NPCs

Felix and Antianetta are the two most important adversaries of this adventure, therefore they should be lifelike and believable. They are not characters confined to a room in a dungeon, but people who wander about Ungrad every night. For ease of reference, a description of each NPC's physical appearance, social standing, combat strategy, and statistics is presented below.

### Felix Hoyer, Mayor of Ungrad

Hoyer is as a tall, overweight man with a bushy black beard and alert, steel-gray eyes. If encountered in the streets of Ungrad at night, he will usually be sitting in a wooden sleigh pulled by two bay horses. Outdoors, he wears a silver-white fur coat made from winter wolf pelts (worth about 5,000 gp). The thick coat effectively conceals his stylish clothes: tweed pants, vest, and overcoat; a starched white shirt, its rigid collar closed by a cream cravat with an emerald brooch (worth 950 gp); black gloves and leather riding boots. If encountered on foot, he walks with a pronounced limp, leaning heavily on a stout oak walking stick with a carved silver head depicting a brooding gargoyle (worth 50 gp).

Hoyer takes elaborate pains to appear human, and has over the decades perfected his role as a stern but effective mayor. His limp is entirely feigned, and he makes frequent public appearances at the local taverns. Because of his mature age as a vampire, Felix is no longer affected by garlic. He can also withstand limited exposure to sunlight—up to a full round—without any ill effect. His teeth are flawlessly straight but not overtly pointed except when he is about to sample a victim's blood.

Felix embarked on a public wolf-slaying campaign that increased his popularity a hundredfold after his mismanagement of the White Fever epidemic that immediately followed his appointment as mayor. While wolves used to roam the streets of Ungrad, carrying unattended children off into the nearby woods, now the canines are found only deep in the evergreen forests. Of course, Hoyer carefully engineered this plan to endear him to his subjects. Like all vampires, he can command wolves at will.

Hoyer always keeps a magical dagger named Wolfkiller sheathed at his side. Wolfkiller is a *dagger +1, +3 vs. lycanthropes.* The pommel has been worked into the likeness of wolf with a ruby (2,000-gp value) clamped between its jaws. Whenever the blade comes within 30′ of a lycanthrope (even if sheathed), the ruby glares with a ruddy glow. Whether the blade is visible or not, lycanthropes within 30′ of the dagger can sense its hostile presence and seek the destruction of both the blade and its owner.

The DM should keep Hoyer's true identity as a vampire secret for as long as possible. He uses his magical abilities discretely and never drains the blood of a victim in the presence of witnesses (he will attack with Wolfkiller in those cases). Below are a few of his favorite melee tactics:

1. The Dark Powers of Ravenloft have granted Hoyer the ability to scry on the thoughts of anyone within a 30′ radius (including vampires of lesser age). Hoyer uses his *ESP* constantly. During combat, he scans the thoughts of party members to predict their strategy and evaluate a party chain of command (if any). This power, combined with his high Intelligence, should help Hoyer stay one step ahead of the PCs during the course of the adventure.

2. Hoyer relies on his telepathic *charming* power to subdue opponents (−2 on saves). The DM should handle this power mysteriously, rolling saving throws for the PCs secretly, or requesting a 1d20 roll from the victim without explaining the reason.

3. Hoyer's animal form is a large winter wolf (no breath weapon) with cunning gray eyes. He can also assume the form of a giant raven. His statistics are the same in any form, though he runs faster as a wolf (MV 18) and flies faster as a raven (MV 36).

**Felix Hoyer,** nosferatu vampire: INT exceptional; AL NE; AC 1; MV 15, fly 18 (C); HD 9+3; hp 48; THAC0 11 (10 with Wolfkiller); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (1d4+5 with Wolfkiller); SA Constitution drain, *charm person* (save at −2), *ESP* (30′ range); SD +1 or better weapon to hit, spell immunities, regenerate 3 hp per round, summon ravens and wolves, *spider climb,* assume animal or *gaseous form;* SZ M; ML 16; XP 4,000; RT.

### Dr. Antianetta Despini-Hoyer

Antianetta appears to be a young human female. Tall but fine-boned, she has chestnut hair and ice-blue eyes. A classic beauty, she takes little care of her physical appearance, devoting much more time to rushing purposefully about town with her physician's bag. Outdoors, Antianetta wears a heavy wool winter cloak with a voluminous hood. Unlike Felix, she rarely attires herself fashionably (except when receiving visitors to the Hoyer residence at night), preferring the simple and practical clothing of the townspeople. She wears no jewelry and appears unarmed.

Antianetta is a talented physician and healer, respected by the citizens of Ungrad for her skill at treating White Fever. She has a competent if somewhat detached bedside manner. She has the equivalent of healing, brewing, and herbalism nonweapon proficiencies.

Antianetta is perhaps the most cunning of vampires; she has a chosen a profession that requires her to be frequently in the presence of blood. And since the treatment for many common maladies involves bloodletting, few notice what she does with the blood afterward.

Antianetta's bag contains the accoutrements of a healer. In a small box inside the bag, she keeps 40+1d10 paper packets containing an odorless purple powder. If this powder is mixed with water or wine and given to a White Fever victim, the patient recovers lost Constitution points at twice the usual rate (two points per day of bed rest).

Although Antianetta appears unarmed, she is far from defenseless. Wedged in a side pocket of her physician's bag, Antianetta keeps a velvet pouch containing six doses of *dust of sneezing and choking,* formulated from fungi indigenous to Ungrad. She uses it only after all attempts at negotiation (and *charming*) have failed.

**Antianetta Hoyer,** nosferatu vampire: INT exceptional; AL LE; AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C); HD 8+3; hp 40; THAC0 13 (11 with scalpel); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (1d3+3 with scalpel); SA Constitution drain, *charm person* (save at −2); SD +1 or better weapon to hit, spell immunities, regenerate 3 hp per round, summon bats and wolves, *spider climb,* assume snow leopard (MV 15) or *gaseous form;* SZ M; ML 16; XP 3,000; RT.

doctor and the mayor was arranged and performed by the baron immediately in secret.

Both newlyweds, while clearly reluctant, swallowed their protests for fear of angering Urik. Felix clearly resented Antianetta for her role as Urik's monitor, while Antianetta was less than pleased with having to spend a potentially long portion of her undead existence languishing in a backwater town instead of traveling, which she greatly enjoyed.

Nevertheless, the pair returned to Ungrad and enacted a very public wooing. After a proper courting period had passed, they displayed the certificate of marriage signed by the baron and threw a lavish wedding feast, during which Awilda returned and cursed the mayor (as described in the "Adventure Background").

Fully prepared to be immediately slain by the vampire, Awilda was surprised and somewhat indignant when the mayor and his new bride ignored her completely. During the past decade, Awilda has renounced her wandering heritage and settled down in Ungrad, where she can keep a close eye on her mortal enemy and wait for the Land to answer her plea for revenge.

As for Felix and Antianetta, the decade since their marriage has passed with relative ease. Their early resentment for each other has now been replaced by a healthy, effective partnership. There is no affection or love between the two, but both have found fulfillment in sharing their professional lives, at least.

Felix has proven to be a clever, manipulative administrator and has exceeded even the baron's expectations in that regard. His light taxes are collected regularly, and although food is rationed to make it last throughout the long winter, few in Ungrad go hungry at night. Just about the only hardship is White Fever, and thanks to Dr. Hoyer, most cases are mild and short lived if the patients report to her small hospital during the early stages.

This couple's altruism is an excellent vehicle for thought control, which the pair of vampires have accomplished almost entirely. Since the citizens feel completely safe and familiar with the mayor and his esteemed wife, they almost never question any "polite requests" and are hence quite susceptible to their vampiric *charms*. Without exception, the citizens would be enraged at anyone who would dare suggest that their most trusted—even loved—public figures were anything other than folk heroes.

Once every four years, a beautiful 18-year-old human maiden is selected from Ungrad to serve the baron in his castle. Although this responsibility is passed around to a different town in Valachan each year, only in Ungrad is it viewed as a privilege. Families in Ungrad volunteer to send their young daughters to serve the baron, even though they will never see or hear from their child again.

The next Festival of Choosing, during which another female will be selected for the baron, is not scheduled for two years in Ungrad, long after this adventure is to take place. The ritual is mentioned only to give the DM a greater understanding of the subtle evil lurking in Ungrad's background when the party arrives.

### Ungrad's Customs

Rather than succumbing to the frequent outbreaks of White Fever, Ungraders resist it vehemently with good cheer. Life is cherished and to be lived fully, since it might end at any moment after a sudden illness, just like it did for so many during the Great Epidemic. Public displays of affection are common in the streets. Strangers are greeted warmly with a smile, and directions are given cheerfully.

Family life revolves around the middens, compost heaps that each family tends in their cellars. Typically, each family keeps at least three compost heaps to grow the staple of their diet: mushrooms. Typically one heap will be fallow for two weeks, with the family adding their wastes to the compost bed to nourish the spores, which are everywhere in Ungrad. After two weeks, the bed is inoculated by spores from the air and the adjacent mature mushroom bed. In another two weeks, the family harvests a crop of mushrooms. Since the method of inoculation is by no means reproducible, a wide variety of mushrooms usually grows every two weeks. Because the midden cellars remain at a constant temperature regardless of the surface conditions, Ungraders can cultivate mushrooms even during the coldest part of winter.

Children are taught from an early age which types of mushrooms are safe and which are deadly. Still, due to the deadly whims of the Land, occasionally a deadly mushroom mutates to resemble a harmless cousin. It is a wife's duty to test every mushroom dish for her family. It is also the wife's responsibility to tend the mushrooms, while the men toil in the field or forests.

During the summer, farmers scurry out to the fields to plant potatoes as soon as the topsoil thaws. The land is rich, and yields three or four potato crops before the frosts of winter return. The harvested potatoes are stored in great warehouses, from which they can be retrieved at any time by members of the community. During the winter, men scour the forests for firewood and game, hunting with snare and short bow. The large number of wolves in the forests can make hunting and wood-gathering a dangerous undertaking, however.

## Into the Mists

Awilda's demand for vengeance can be fulfilled when strangers come; in this case, when the Mists bring the PCs to Ungrad. Whether the party is camping near the misty border in Ravenloft or in a DM's campaign world, the start of the adventure is similar. The roving Mists of Ravenloft pluck the adventurers from their campsite and transport them to Ungrad. Tailor the introduction of the party into Valachan to suit the circumstances, using the following description as a guideline:

> The midnight watch wakes you all with a shout. As you snap out of sleep, you notice a thick cloud of freezing snow rolling down the hillside and into the camp. The frenzied whickering of your mounts is silenced as the light, powdery avalanche washes over them and envelops everything. With disturbing speed, it starts to get cooler, until you feel a deep, numbing chill in your exposed hands and face.
>
> The snow settles as quickly as it arrived, but an alien night sky greets your upturned eyes. Looking about, you notice your camp is now established on the ice-hard ground of an evergreen grove. The wide ivory moon washes the snow and pines with its cold iridescence.
>
> A bitter wind blows from the west, gnawing through tightly wrapped cloaks and armor. The horses stomp

the ground in annoyance at the abrupt change in climate. Your group huddles closely around the small campfire for warmth.

Abruptly, the baying of wolves rolls through the camp, startling your horses, who stomp and squeal. The howling draws nearer. A hart suddenly bounds into an adjacent clearing in the pines, with six wolves in pursuit close behind. The deer is startled by your presence and tries to circumvent your camp, but it's quickly torn apart by the wolves. Having downed the deer, the wolves turn to you and growl. The shadowy forms of over a dozen more wolves dance from tree to tree at the perimeter of your night vision.

"Hush, they're only humans." The speaker is a young girl who approaches in the wake of the six wolves, who immediately fall silent. She cannot be more than 10 years old, with long, flowing raven-black hair and wide, liquid eyes. Her tattered and dirt-smeared nightdress is whipped about by the ice-laden wind to reveal a gaunt form. As she picks her way carefully across the clearing to the wolves, her bare feet leave small prints in the foot-deep snow.

The girl studies the PCs carefully for a minute. She ignores most questions but introduces herself as Eliza. She mentions that her family of wolves is still hungry, and looks meaningfully at the PC's horses. Eliza expects the PCs to give her at least one mount for food (or any other living animal—rations are unacceptable).

A former vampire slave of Hoyer, Eliza has never killed a human and thus has never became a full-fledged vampire. While she is not at the peak of her strength, neither is she commanded by Hoyer. She was only under Hoyer's complete control while in his sight; because she never drank human blood, she has been able to resist Hoyer's call to return to him. Eliza has remained in the woods surrounding Ungrad ever since she was rescued by her mother Awilda over 12 years ago.

In all that time, she has drunk only the blood of animals to sustain herself. Unfortunately, vampires were meant to dine on human blood—hence Eliza's emaciated appearance and lesser hit dice. She cannot tolerate human company for very long, lest her own nature force her to drink. Despite her youthful appearance, she is over 20 years old. Each night before dawn, she claws a shallow grave and buries herself in the frozen ground until the following evening, while her family of wolves guards her resting place. Under no circumstances will she reveal the slightest hint about her undead existence. If the PCs ask if she is cold, she offhandedly mentions, "I hadn't noticed."

**Eliza** (nosferatu vampire): INT very; AL CN; AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (special power); HD 7 (feeding only on animal blood); hp 25; THAC0 13 (11 with weapon); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type +4; SA Constitution drain, *charm person* (save at −2); SD +1 or better weapon to hit, standard undead immunities, regenerate 3 hp per round, summon wolves, *spider climb*, assume white wolf form or *gaseous form* (no bat form); SZ S; ML 16; RT.

**Eliza** (wolf form): INT, AL, HD, hp, THAC0, SA, SD (but not *spider climb*), ML as above. AC, MV, #AT, Dmg, SZ as for wolves, below.

**Wolves** (17): INT semi; AL N; AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 11-14; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; SZ S; ML 10; XP 65; MC1.

If attacked, Eliza first *charms* the strongest-looking warrior and orders him to untether the party's mounts while the wolves keep the other PCs busy. She never uses her Constitution drain power, preferring to *charm* others to fight for her. Once the horses are free, or if Eliza is reduced to 10 or fewer hp, she hastily retreats.

If the party voluntarily gives up at least one mount, Eliza will be grateful. "You look lost," she says. "My mother can help you find where you are going. She lives in Ungrad. Tell her I'm happy."

After about five minutes, Eliza grows restless. During your conversation, you have noticed her licking her lips with increasing frequency. Abruptly, she turns and sprints away, with the six wolves close behind. Soon the entire pack has melted away into the night.

Shaken after your encounter with Eliza, you shiver around the fire

until dawn. As the sun rises over the mists to the east, you notice the enormous shape of a huge mountain range to the west, from which the harsh wind has been blowing relentlessly all evening. Even with the sun up, the temperature is far below freezing.

## Haunted Middens

Perhaps the biggest problem that the PCs initially face is the brutal cold. Daytime temperature hovers around 20°F; the wind chill makes this feel much colder. Unless the players mentioned that their PCs were packing cold-weather gear *before* the start of the adventure, assume that the PCs have at best a long cloak to keep them warm. See the *Wilderness Survival Guide,* page 19, for the effects of exposure.

Not far to the east, the pine grove thins out, affording a view of a few huddled buildings. You can make out the thin line of a snow-covered road winding its way down into a lower valley.

Because of the deep snow, the party can cover a mile an hour on foot, two miles an hour if mounted. The buildings are about one mile away.

As you draw closer, you notice that the structures are mere stone shells of a house and some outbuildings. The settlement appears to have been in ruins for quite some time. A few blackened timbers remain, but there is not the slightest hint of soot in the cold air. You can smell a faint pungent odor that the bitter wind obscures.

These ruins are the remains of the Nircada family residence. This family dared defy Mayor Hoyer in the nearby town of Ungrad, blaming him for spreading White Fever. Within a month, most of the family had died of the mysterious disease, and afterward Hoyer ordered the house burned to prevent the spread of the malady.

About a year after Hoyer burned the house, an enterprising dwarf named Ambrick (see area 3) tried to salvage the house's middens, safely intact in the stone cellar beneath the burned building. The dwarf and his workers managed to enter the cellar but were driven away by a restless spirit that protects the middens.

If the PCs decide to search the ruins, they will easily discover the entrance to the cellar, along with wolf tracks and droppings. The stone shells of the buildings are overgrown with an ocher moss, which deer appear to have been munching on lately. A faint pungent smell lingers near the cellar entrance.

Ambrick's expedition boarded up the cellar door, but his written warning has been eroded away by Valachan's relentless elements. The planks are gray with age and covered with brown moss. The bones of a deer and wolf lie in snow-covered heaps near the opening as warnings for other animals to stay away. If the PCs persist in investigating the opening, read the following to the players:

The pungent smell is much stronger near the plank-covered opening. An earthy smell seeps out, like wet leaves or maybe freshly turned ground. But there is an stomach-turning edge to it as well that grows with proximity to the opening.

The planks are rotten and fall away from the opening easily, revealing a narrow set of steps going down, only wide enough for people to descend in single file. The walls become increasingly choked with an olive-brown and pale white mold as one descends, and small brown mushroomlike growths dot the cracks in the crumbling masonry. The steps end in a mold- and mushroom-covered door.

The stench of decay is overpowering at the base of the steps, like a roomful of apples left to rot in the dark. It requires a successful open-doors check to budge the swollen portal. Once the door is muscled open, rotten, spore-laden air escapes from the room beyond. PCs in the stairwell must make a saving throw vs. poison or suffer a wasting disease that results in the loss of one point each of Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution per day. When an ability score reaches zero, the victim dies. His corpse quickly decomposes and becomes a shambling mound. The ailment can be cured with a successful healing proficiency check or with a *cure disease* spell. One point of each ability is regained per day of bed rest.

The basement is haunted by the geist of Frau Birgit Nircada. When the guards from Ungrad arrived to burn down the "disease infested" house, Frau Nircada was one of the few members of the family still alive. The guards served the old woman with an eviction notice, but to no avail. She would not leave her ancestral home, even if it meant dying from White Fever. As she fled to the middens in the basement she slipped, hit her head on the stone steps, and died instantly. The guards respectfully put her corpse in the middens to mingle with the remains of her ancestors. Almost all Ungraders are buried in this way, so their decomposing bodies add to the nourishment of their family for generations to come. Frau Nircada persists as a geist and defends her middens against all intruders.

**Frau Nircada,** geist: INT average; AL N(E); AC 10; MV fly 12; HD nil; hp nil; THAC0 nil; #AT nil; Dmg nil; SA sight causes panic; SD invulnerable; MR 100%; SZ M; ML 20; RT.

Beyond the door, the PCs discover the house middens, three 5′ × 10′ compost troughs overgrown with mushrooms of all sizes. If the PCs investigate, the geist will take action, whispering "Get out!" into the ear of one of the PCs while remaining *invisible.* For best effect, the DM should write the words on a folded piece of paper and hand it to one of the players. If the PCs insist on hanging around, Frau Nircada makes herself visible:

Suddenly, you hear the low moaning of a woman coming from the enormous pile of mushrooms closest to the door. "You can't make me leave! Never! I'll guard my home forever!" The mushrooms start quivering, and a rotten corpse erupts from beneath them. The head appears to have been practically cracked in two, and large black earthworms dangle from the split skull. The creature throws back its head and laughs.

Any PCs unfortunate enough to witness this must roll both fear and horror checks. The spectacle is merely an illusion spun by the geist to frighten away the PCs. If they stand their ground, the illusion dissipates, but the insane laughter continues. The PCs must make fear checks each round they remain in the middens. There is no treasure here, other than the middens, which make excellent food for mushrooms, molds, and other fungi. If the PCs can figure

out a way to recover the middens, they can be sold to Ambrick's Mushroom House, area 3, for 100 gp.

A small stone bridge spans a frozen stream to the east of the ruins. A snow-covered road runs six miles down into a gorge to the north.

## Ungrad

> The road winds its way down the side of the gorge to a town about a mile to the northwest. An enormous snow-capped mountain range broods over the town, its upper reaches embraced by the mist.

The normal sorts of merchants, tradesmen, and craftsmen can be found in Ungrad. The DM can detail them if it becomes necessary. If the party needs to purchase cold weather gear, armor (the best armorer in town can make only chain mail), weapons, rations, or the like, the PCs will find the shop owners friendly and eager to accommodate them. Because of Ungrad's secluded location, prices for goods and most services are 10% higher than those in the *Player's Handbook (PH)* unless stated otherwise. The following items cannot be purchased in town: mirrors, holy or priestly items, potions, and scrolls. The DM should not mention the lack of any of these items unless someone in the party tries to buy one.

A list of interesting places to visit in Ungrad appears below. The DM is urged to add more encounters and flesh out the town (perhaps with a few colorful merchants) to fit the specifics of the individual Ravenloft campaign.

**1. Town Gates.**

> After tromping down the frozen road for hours, you have at last reached the gates of a small town. Your garments—soaked with perspiration by early morning—have by now hardened into a frozen crust. The day seems to have passed in a flash. Already the sun is dipping toward the horizon!
>
> The town itself is circled by an unadorned stone wall, no more than 15′ high, with no battlements. The masonry has crumbled near the top, and the stones themselves are covered with a shaggy brown odorless moss, mingled with snow, which has lent the pure white flakes a sullied appearance.
>
> The main gate is watched by a single tower two stories high. The gate is shut, and no guards are visible.

The town guards have enough sense to stay indoors during this time of year, although a shout or knock from the PCs quickly gets their attention. The gates are shut to keep out the wolves that prowl the countryside, not people. The PCs are welcome in Ungrad, unless they refuse to pay the gate tax.

Although residents of Ungrad do not have to pay a fee to enter or leave the town, strangers must pay 1 ep each per person, +1 gp each if mounted, +1 gp each if armed with anything more than a dagger. The toll is not negotiable, and those who refuse to pay are not allowed inside the town. If the party does not have enough money to pay, the PCs can always try climbing the wall after dark.

A small but skilled watch keeps the peace and defends the town against attacks by wolves. These fighters are all hand picked (and *charmed*) by the mayor from among the town's finest hunters.

**Guards** (6): AL LN; AC 8; MV 12; F1; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 14; leather armor, spear, hand axe, dagger, short bow.

Thievery is not tolerated in Ungrad. Any culprit caught in the act is taken to the Town Hall (area 6) for a meeting with the mayor, who *charms* the thief and orders him never to steal again. There is no organized town watch at the moment because of the weather. If a problem arises, residents fetch help from the nearest guard tower.

Each rectangular tower in the wall has a ground floor 12′ on a side, with a fireplace and a wooden ladder leading to the second floor. The second story also consists of a guardroom with a fireplace. The peaked wooden roof leaves no room for a wall walk. There are typically 2-5 guards stationed at each tower.

> Once through the gates, you see that the outer wall, while relatively high, is at most a few feet thick. The masonry of the town walls does not appear immune to the ravages of the elements and the relentless mold, which have literally eaten away the mortar near the wall top. The whole

structure looks crumbled and decayed.

In general, most buildings in town are two-story stone structures with peaked roofs and large chimneys blowing black clouds of smoke into the cold winter air. Shaggy moss—brown, olive, and ochre—drapes every vertical surface.

The town streets are covered with snow, but from the scarcity of tracks, it seems that most people—like the town guards—are staying indoors because of the weather. Still, a few intrepid townspeople are out, bent under heavy loads of firewood. A young man notices you from beneath his thick cloak and heavy scarf.

"You look cold and lost, my friends," the youth says, his eyes crinkled into a friendly smile. His voice is muffled by his heavy outer garments.

The young man quickly introduces himself as Christopher Barkos. He is glad to direct the party to the nearest warm meal (Ambrick's Mushroom House, area 3; "Be sure to try the mushroom soup and Ambrick's hot sugar noodles!") or a posh, luxurious inn (The Inn of Quiet Repose, area 4; "The only warm bath in town!"). If the PCs look like they are in really bad shape (no cold weather gear, or suffering the effects of a run-in at the "Haunted Middens"), Christopher will escort them to the town's small hospital (area 5).

**Christopher Barkos**: AL NG; AC 8; MV 12; F2; hp 15; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 17, C 15, Ch 15; ML 14; leather armor, hand axe, hunting knife, short bow.

If the PCs tell Christopher about their encounter with Eliza, his smile immediately vanishes and is replaced by a more serious, thoughtful expression. Most townspeople have heard rumors about the young girl, running in the forest with wild wolves. Christopher suggests that the party call on the old gypsy living in the north part of town (area 7). He can give them directions but no more specific information about either Eliza or her mother.

**2. Warehouses.**

Large, windowless buildings, each with a single entrance, line the street here, dwarfing the nearby houses. Judging by the trails of trampled snow leading up to the doors, it seems that these structures see frequent use, even in winter.

Although these structures once had a white plaster finish, it has been almost entirely eaten away by the lime-green mold that covers most of the exterior. In many places, the decaying plaster has fallen away to expose the masonry beneath, which is coated with a thin layer of brown-black moss.

These warehouses contain the stockpiled harvest for the townspeople. The entrances are closed but unlocked, and the interiors smell pungent, like freshly turned earth. The warehouses are filled with open bins containing potatoes, carrots, and other dried vegetables, all covered with a fine white powder (fungicide). Anything not covered by the powder—especially the wooden rafters of the ceiling and the outer surfaces of the wooden bins—shows a remarkable amount of greenish mold growth.

There are no guards inside. There is nothing to prevent anyone (even the PCs) from walking in and taking an armful of vegetables. Clearly, theft and hunger are not problems in Ungrad.

**3. Ambrick's Mushroom House.**

You notice the sign of a squat red mushroom on a white background hanging in front of a wide, single-story building. It is probably a tavern of some sort, judging by the peppery, delicious aromas, mingled with wood smoke, that linger in the street outside. Unlike other buildings you have encountered so far, this structure seems relatively free from mold or moss, at least on the outside.

Inside, you find a large common room filled with tables and benches, big enough to accommodate more than 100 patrons. Customers stand shoulder to shoulder at the long bar, and a huge fireplace blazes merrily. Waitresses hurry between the patrons, the bar, and what must be the kitchen entrance next to the hearth.

Whoever designed this tavern must have liked mushrooms. Platter-sized toadstools grow out of the walls and the ceiling rafters, while button-sized yellow mushrooms are splattered across the wide hearth, seemingly unaffected by their proximity to a roaring fire. At some tables where food has not yet arrived, a few hungry customers are snacking contentedly on the mushrooms that are growing all around them. Even the wooden chairs and tables have been carved to resemble squat, massive mushrooms.

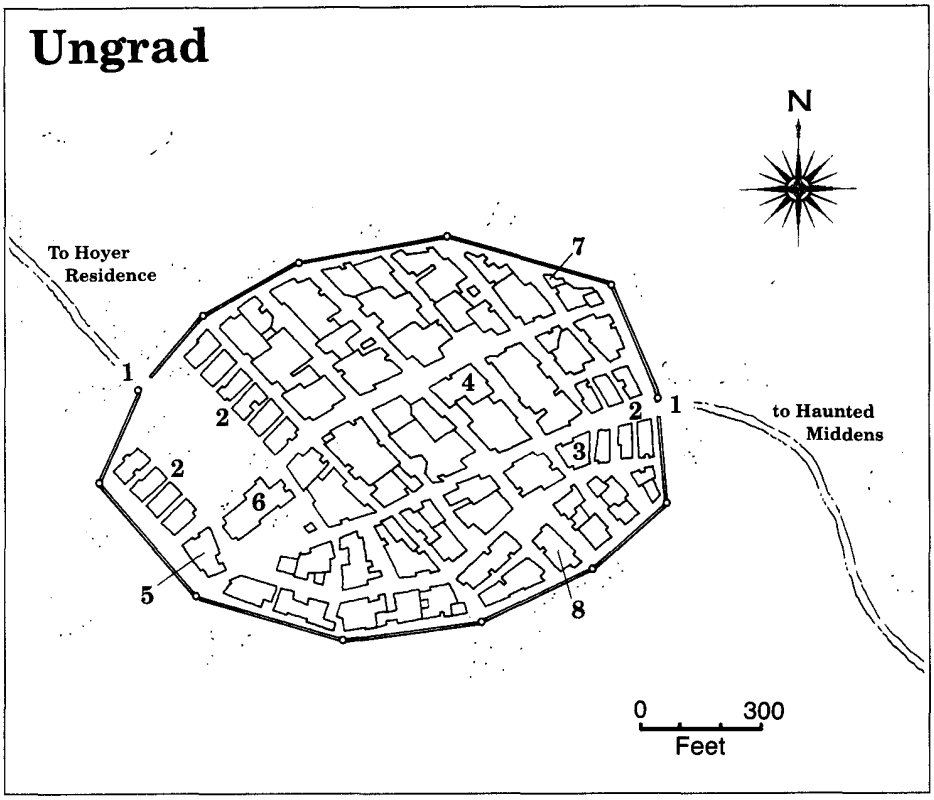
The party is greeted at the door by the proprietor, a stocky middle-aged dwarf named Ambrick. The dwarf is conspicuous in his hatred of mold of any sort (this includes moss, but *not* mushrooms, which he loves to distraction). He inspects the walls frequently, making sure that no new mold has started encroaching on his beloved mushrooms.

**Ambrick** (dwarf): AL N; AC 9; MV 9; F3; hp 22; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 16, C 17, W 14, Ch 14; ML 14; leather apron, dagger.

Ambrick's curious aversion stems from his attempt to recover the Nircada family middens after the house was burned down by Hoyer 12 years ago. After his encounter with the geist (and a failed horror check), he has never been able to tolerate the sight of mold. If the party seems to need work, he might enlist the PCs' aid in recovering the haunted middens, offering as much as a 100 gp reward. Of course, it's likely that the entire party will soon end up with mold-a-phobia if they accept the dwarf's proposition.

After the PCs have been seated, Ambrick informs them of the house special, an Ungradi favorite: mushroom and onion soup, a thick peppery mixture that tastes more like meat stew than any kind of vegetable soup (it costs 4 cp per bowl; a thinner, less savory mixture is available for half price). For dessert, Ambrick recommends his famous "Hot Sugar Noodles," a bargain at only 2 cp per bowl. If someone orders them, the waitress places a bowl filled with a warm, sugary broth before the lucky PC. Floating in the broth are translucent white noodles that taste like a combination of soft cartilage and wax. It is definitely an acquired taste, since only the local residents seem to be relishing their bowls.

If the PCs ask what the noodles are made of (after sampling them, of course), Ambrick will wink and say, "My own special crop of white fungus. Isn't it great?" He's quite serious, but it




might be amusing to see what the PCs do with their half-finished bowls after they learn what they have been eating.

The Mushroom House is a good place to pick up information about Ungrad. The PCs can learn most of the information provided in the "Adventure Background" section if they spend most of an evening here and buy 1-4 gp worth of drinks for the townspeople.

There are no rooms to rent in the tavern, but Ambrick will recommend the Inn of Quiet Repose if anyone asks. Besides the common room, there is a kitchen and a small office on the ground floor. The kitchen is hardly noteworthy, except for the stairs leading down into the tavern's cellar (just barrels of ale) and extensive middens, overgrown with plump, juicy mushrooms and curiously free of mold.

The door leading into Ambrick's office from the kitchen is unlocked. The small room is 10′ square and contains the yearly tax rolls, income records, and inventories. A locked strongbox kept in one corner of the office contains only 2,305 cp, 384 sp, and 172 gp. Neither Ambrick nor his staff have quarters in the Mushroom House, since the tavern closes around midnight and everyone goes home to sleep.

**4. The Inn of Quiet Repose.** During the winter, with the only road leading into town under high snowdrifts, only one inn is open to receive visitors:

> From the street, you notice an ornate stone house with a covered porch. Thick ocher moss covers much of the structure, obscuring much of the detailed stonework, but it is still clear that this is a large, stately residence.
>
> A shoveled path leads from the street through a snow-covered lawn to the porch entrance. A signpost by the entrance depicts a man asleep in a canopied bed.

This inn is managed by a very eccentric proprietor who likes to be called Mademoiselle Beatrice. Formerly from Pont a Mousseáu, this young, rich, and foolish wizard left her homeland for Valachan five years ago to learn more about vampirism. She had learned enough magic to protect herself during her travels, and with her powerful family heirloom, an evil version of an *amulet vs. undead* (the device allows her to command undead as if she were an evil 9th-level priest), she thought she could command a vampire to bestow the Dark Gift on her. She thought wrong. Beatrice's defiant spirit did amuse Felix Hoyer, however, who pays her weekly visits but never drains very much of her blood.

Beatrice's trafficking with undead, her evil amulet, and her dabbling in necromancy have convinced her that if she behaves like a vampire, she will become one (hence her selection of spells, which duplicate many of a vampire's powers). If she continues to follow the path of deadly desire, her wish may come true (see MC10, "Vampire"). If only she weren't so afraid of the sight of blood.

**Mademoiselle Beatrice**: AL N(E); AC 9; MV 12; W9; hp 25; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 9, D 15, C 7, I 17, W 11, Ch 16; ML 16; dagger, evil *amulet vs. undead.* Spells: *charm person, spider climb, unseen servant* (×2)*; alter self, invisibility, mirror image; fly, vampiric touch* (×2)*; fear, vacancy; summon shadow.*

The PCs are relatively safe from Beatrice's antics, provided they don't insult her by intruding on her "crypt" (area 4L). She won't stoop to assaulting her guests unless attacked first, although she might enjoy scaring them. At the sight of fresh blood, roll a fear check for Beatrice.

The house interior is poshly overdecorated with lots of paisley-patterned draperies, red velvet wallpaper, potted plants, landscape paintings in gold-painted frames, porcelain urns, and ornate rugs. The overpowering aroma of scented rose petals and potpourri hangs in every room, as if to mask the all-pervasive reek of mold.

**4A. Arcaded Porch.** The cleared path leads up to the mold-covered front door of the house. The rest of the porch is covered by low snowdrifts. As the PCs approach, the doors swing open, apparently by themselves (the work of an *unseen servant*).

**4B. Reception Room.** Beatrice greets the PCs from the foot of the stairs and asks "Matilde" (the *unseen servant*) to take their coats. Describe this encounter clearly so that it is as spooky as possible.

Beatrice is a pale, upper-class noblewoman with a light French accent.

Although she is clearly young, the woman's long braided hair and eyebrows are snow white. Her skin is so pale as to be almost transparent, and she has long, carefully manicured fingernails that she clacks absentmindedly against the wooden banister.

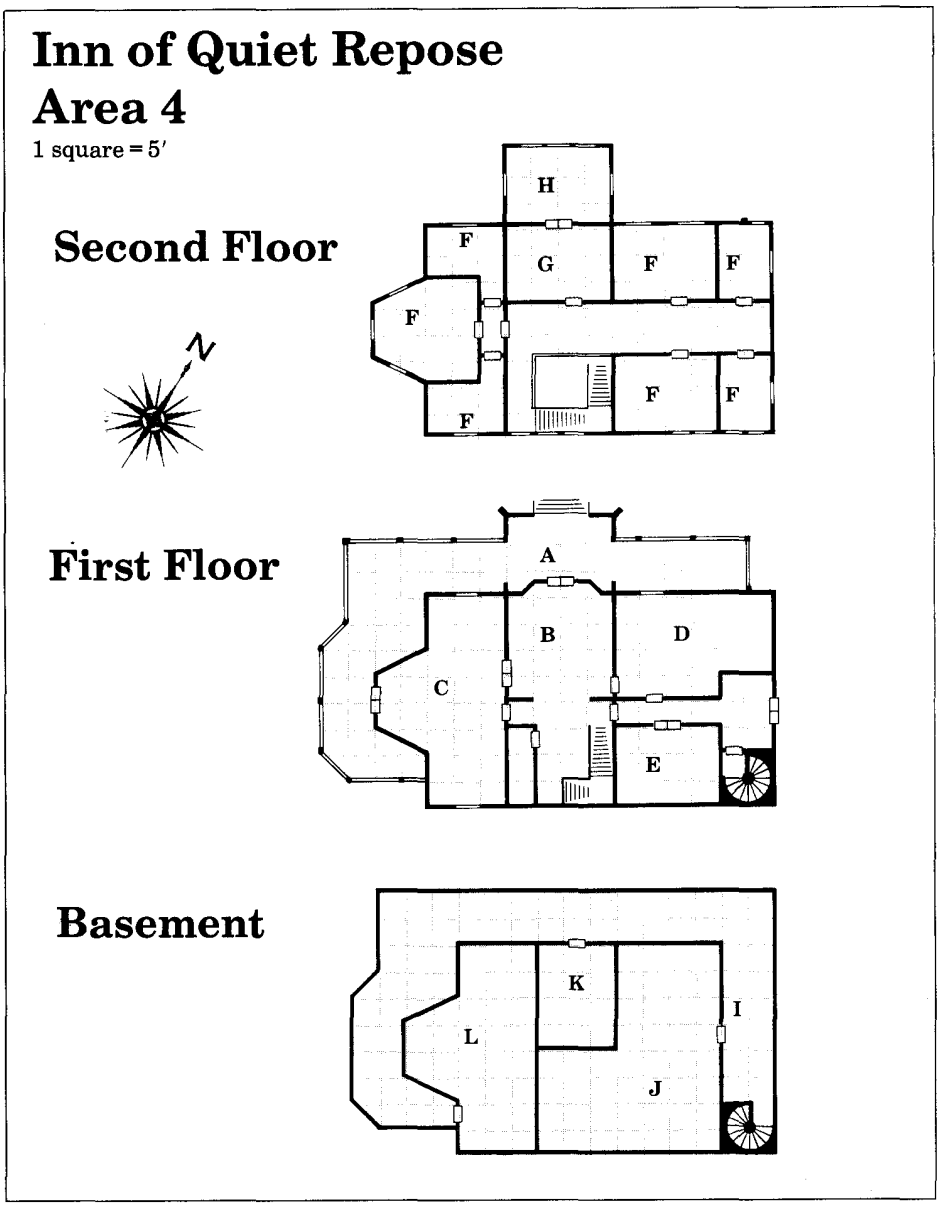
Beatrice charges a modest 5 sp per night (3 gp per week) for a room and can provide hot baths at no added expense. Full meals can be included for double the price. If the party agrees to her rates, the PCs are directed to the parlor for refreshments while the *unseen servant* readies their rooms. If not, they will have to sleep out in the cold, since no other inn is open at this time of year.

**4C. Parlor.** While Beatrice's second *unseen servant* (whom she has named Bascomb) pours the party a complimentary glass of fortified wine, Beatrice attempts to entertain them with light conversation. A mahogany harpsichord sits in the bay window to the east, and she gladly plays a collection of fugues she knows by heart. Although Beatrice is a virtuoso player, there is still something eerie about the sound of her long fingernails clicking on the ivory keys in time with the beautiful music.

**4D. Dining Room.** If the PCs have dinner here, they will be served roast venison and traditional Ungrad mushroom soup, along with delicious red wine (an excellent vintage from Richemulot). The meals are served by the pair of *unseen servants* under Beatrice's constant direction. She sits down for dinner only after all the PCs have been served.

**4E. Kitchen.** There is nothing special about this kitchen. All the meals are prepared by a part-time **chef** (a 0-level human with 3 hp and average statistics), who leaves for home after the dinner dishes have been washed and put away. His employer has her quirks, but the pay is good and the work light, so he doesn't complain.

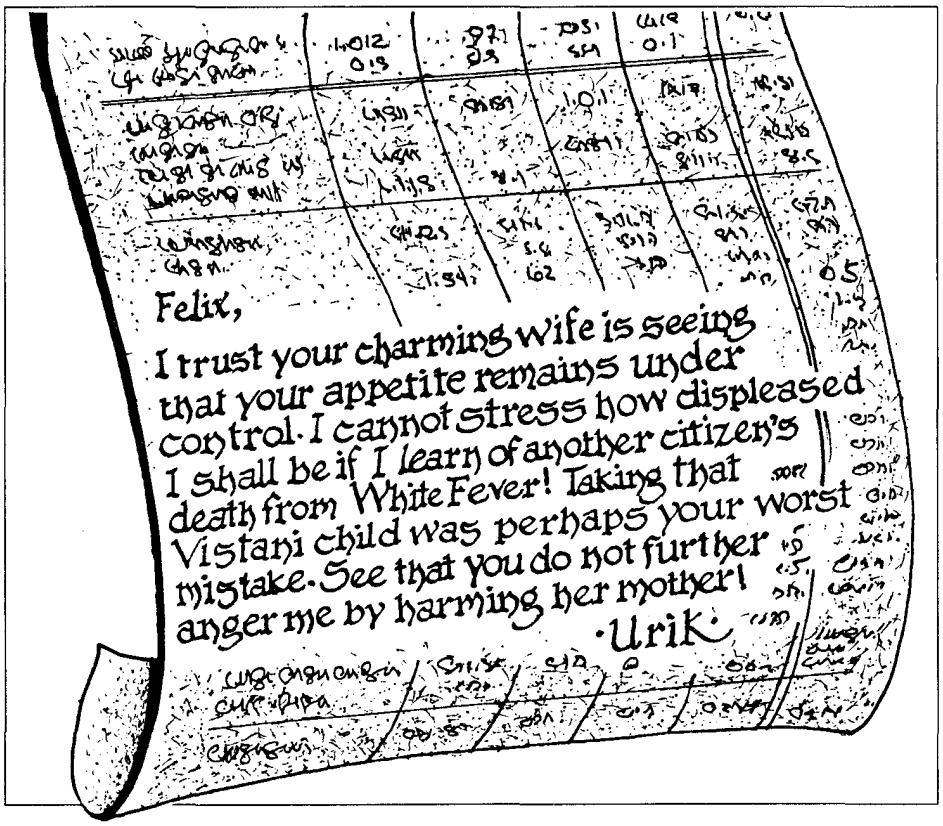
**4F. Guest Rooms.** The PCs cannot hope to find better accommodations in all of Ungrad. A large pile of wood sits beside the fireplace, and the canopied bed has a thick down comforter. The heavy aroma of rose oil overpowers the damp, mildewy smell from the bed sheets and curtains. There is a stout chest in each room with a key in the lock so the PCs can secure their valuables when they leave the room. The doors can be locked and bolted from the inside as well.




**4G. Bathing Chamber.** An elaborate brass bathtub stands in the middle of this chamber, and an enormous kettle hangs over each fireplace. Beatrice will have her *unseen servants* draw a steaming hot bath for the PCs if they so desire.

**4H. Former Bedchamber.** This poshly appointed bedchamber appears to have been deserted for quite some time. A fine layer of furry white mold covers everything like a patina of dust. Beatrice slept here until she got the notion into her head that she was a vampire, after which she moved her belongings into what she felt was a more vampiric location (see area 4L).

**4I. Storage.** When Beatrice finds she has no use for something anymore, it ends up in the moldy shelves that line the walls of this wide corridor. There is nothing interesting or valuable here.


Felix,
I trust your charming wife is seeing
that your appetite remains under
control. I cannot stress how displeased
I shall be if I learn of another citizen's
death from White Fever! Taking that
Vistani child was perhaps your worst
mistake. See that you do not further
anger me by harming her mother!
-Urik

**4J. Middens.** Three large troughs overgrown with large mushrooms fill the room. The underground garden appears well tended (by the part-time chef from area 4E).

**4K. Wine Cellar.** Beatrice keeps a large collection of excellent wines from Richemulot here. The 35 bottles are worth from 1-20 gp each. In a crate packed with sawdust, the PCs can find three bottles of Meekulbrau, a rare wine produced in the domain of Harmonia. It is a bitter wine and stains one's mouth blood red, but it is supposed to relax the throat and improve one's singing voice. The bottles are easily worth 100 gp each.

**4L. Crypt.** The iron door to this room is securely locked; only Beatrice has the key. This room is cloaked by a *vacancy* spell when Beatrice is not present.

In the middle of this vaulted stone chamber, raised on a stone platform to about bed level, rests an ornate padded coffin. There's even a pillow and a down blanket inside. The stone platform is hollow and contains a small secret door that conceals Beatrice's savings of 547 gp.

A woman's divan has been pushed up against the wall by the door. A small ornate box rests on the divan; the box contains 1-6 pieces of jewelry (base value 500 gp each). The divan is also covered with female cosmetic supplies. A chest of drawers contains female clothing appropriate for an elegant noblewoman.

A chest of books rests on the floor at the foot of the coffin. Most of the books discuss vampires, though a few relate to magic. Beatrice also keeps her spell book here. It contains the spells she has memorized plus two extra spells of levels 1-5, to be determined by the DM.

Beatrice sleeps here during the day but will go upstairs if she hears the PCs or the chef calling for her. She will gladly spend most of the evening playing the harpsichord in the parlor or talking with the PCs about whatever interests them. She can supply them with most of the information provided in the "Adventure Background" section.

**5. Hospital.** This single-story building has many windows and is entirely free of mold, mushrooms, or moss. The smell of ammonia is very strong here.

The hospital consists of a small common ward containing 24 beds (only five are occupied at the moment, all with victims of White Fever), a nurse's office, and an office for Dr. Hoyer. The offices contain medical supplies but nothing other than the medical records one would expect. The medical charts show that over 60% of the hospital's patients suffer from White Fever. Medical texts in the doctor's office state that the only known cure for White Fever is bed rest and time, though recovery may be facilitated by certain mixtures of powdered mushrooms.

There is always one **nurse** present (a 0-level human with average statistics and healing nonweapon proficiency, with an 11 ability check). If the PCs are wounded or infected, they can be immediately treated by the nurse, for a 5 sp fee per day of bed use. Or, the PCs may wait for the doctor herself. She arrives soon after dark and charges 1 gp for her medical talents.

If the PCs visit after dark, there is a 50% chance that Antianetta is already present. She can treat any nonmagical disease with an 85% chance of success, although her methods involve a little blood-letting (loss of 1 hp). The doctor makes a small incision with a scalpel in a PC's arm and drains the blood into a copper bowl she carries in her bag. When she thinks the PCs are not looking, she pours the blood into a vial for later consumption. The doctor is not so foolish as to attack the PCs while in the hospital; she waits until later to make her move (see the "First Night" section, below).

**6. Town Hall.**

Ungrad's town hall stands at the southern end of a wide square, which in the summertime must be crowded with traveling merchants selling their wares. Now the square is knee high in scudding snowdrifts, and the ornate stone facade, covered with the omnipresent brown moss, looks like a frowning, bearded face.

A crooked sign—"PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS"—hangs over a moldering wooden board. The sign and board are barely recognizable beneath a thin layer of frozen green mold.

The town hall consists of meeting rooms and offices for the mayor and his small staff of clerks, accountants, and

other minor public officials. The staff arrives for work two hours before dawn (around 6:00 A.M.) and leaves two hours after sunset, at 6:00 P.M. The mayor is the first to arrive and open the offices (he is a notoriously early riser, working alone in the office starting around 4:30 A.M.). Felix usually leaves the office on "personal errands" around 7:30 A.M., about half an hour before sunrise, and returns from his errands by 4:30, half an hour after the sun has set. He usually works in the office until after the last clerk has left, going home with his wife around 7:00 P.M.

If the PCs manage to sneak into the building after the mayor has left, they will find nothing more interesting in the outer offices than tax rolls and property listings. The door to the mayor's office is locked after hours. A large map of the Ungrad valley hangs on the wall. If the PCs express any interest in the map, the DM can copy selected portions of the "Ungrad and Vicinity" map. Felix's desk takes up a large portion of the office, and while it is covered with boring bureaucratic letters and memos, a secret drawer in the desk contains a scroll bound with a crimson ribbon.

At first glance, the scroll appears to contain the previous year's tax records, but that is only because it has been enchanted with a *secret page* spell. If the spell is removed without destroying the message underneath (see *PH*, page 152), pass out a copy of the note shown on page 60. There is nothing else of interest at the Town Hall.

### First Night: The Kind Doctor

Throughout most of the winter, the sun rises around 8:00 A.M. and sets around 4:00 P.M. Felix and Antianetta are active for two-thirds of a given 24-hour day. It is unlikely that the party will have much (if any) time to explore Ungrad before the sun sets the first day. That's fine, since there is plenty of time for exploring the town during the following days, while the vampires sleep.

At some time when the party is out on the streets, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> A door to one of the small town houses opens, and a figure, bundled in a heavy cloak and carrying a large leather bag, tries to step into the street but is gently restrained from within by a stocky woman.

> "Doctor, I can't thank you enough for coming out here at this dreadful hour," says the rotund housewife as she tries to grab the figure's arm and press a few coins into a hand. The figure steps awkwardly backward.
>
> "Keep your coin, Alice." The voice muffled by the cloak is definitely female and compassionate. "Just knowing your husband will recover soon is payment enough for me."
>
> She turns abruptly and collides with your party. From within the hooded cloak, her ice-blue eyes widen in surprise before crinkling with an embarrassed smile.

Antianetta introduces herself and attempts to discern if the party needs her help (playing the role of the good doctor to the hilt). She walks the PCs to their destination, insisting that if they ever need her, they should leave a message at the hospital, where she regularly checks in between house calls.

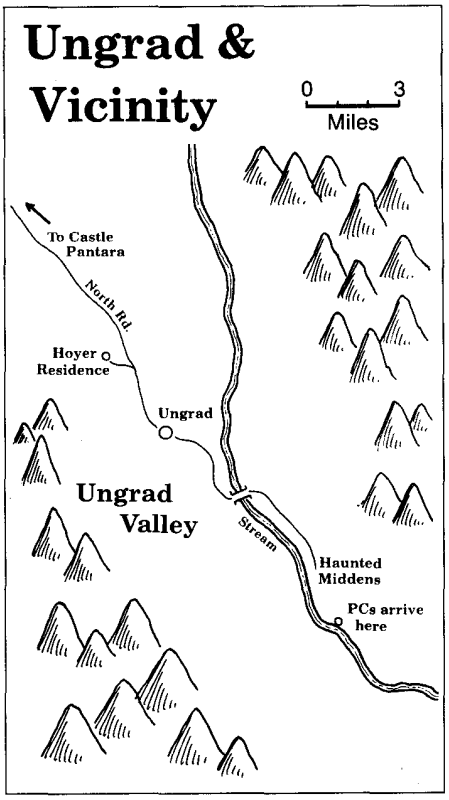
During her chat, she tries to *charm* the PC with the weakest saving throws vs. spells (fighters and thieves over wizards and priests). To heighten suspense later in the adventure, secretly roll a saving throw for the PC (with a −2 penalty). If the PC fails, nothing happens initially. Once the party is safely home in bed that same evening, the doctor telepathically contacts the victim and asks the PC to meet her near an open window, so she can have a snack. For this night only, assume that her feeding is done so quickly and discretely that it occurs without any other party member's knowledge.

In the morning, the victim feels terrible, looks very pale, and is shivering constantly with cold sweats (his Constitution has been drained by four points). Any Ungrader will immediately recognize the symptoms of White Fever and urge the PC to check into the hospital. Unless the PC remains in bed, lost Constitution points cannot be regained. Victims lose all extra hit points from high Constitution scores.

An inspection of the afflicted PC's arm reveals two tiny pink dots about an inch apart near the major veins at the base of the wrist. The dots are so small that they won't be noticed otherwise.

### Awilda's Last Message

Sooner or later, the PCs will visit Awilda. If Eliza's first hint was not enough, try to stage a second creepy encounter with the little girl (no wolves, this time) to get the party going in the right direction. They shouldn't have too much trouble getting directions to Awilda's home. She is a respected, if somewhat feared, fortuneteller.




### 7. Awilda's House.

> You certainly are not in the affluent part of town. Your destination is a crooked house fighting a losing battle with the shaggy moss smothering it. A mold-covered sign above the doorway depicts a mist-filled crystal ball on a black metal stand.
>
> The house is a single-room dwelling partitioned into two areas by a faded purple veil. The area just inside the door has been turned into a reception area. The moldering walls are hidden by faded purple hangings that seem strangely immune to the mold infesting the rest of Ungrad. A feeble fire adds a crimson glow to the windowless room, though it hardly counters the blast of cold air when you open the door. The second half of

the house, barely visible through the thin fabric, appears to be a living and sleeping area. The air is full of the smell of wood smoke and a comforting aroma of incense.

Seated on a violet cushion, an old human woman looks up at you with excited, rheumy eyes. There is something fiercely defiant, almost triumphant in her gaze. She is about to speak to you when suddenly a look of alarm crosses her face.

"No, not yet!" She screeches into the air. "I haven't told you what you must do!" With a strangled cry, she topples from her cushion and lies twitching on the floor.

Invoking a major curse requires payment in return. In this particular instance, the time has come for Awilda to pay the price.

If a PC with healing proficiency makes a successful ability check, he recognizes that Awilda has been struck by a massive stroke. Any attempt to heal her (a successful application of the healing nonweapon proficiency, a *cure light wounds* spell, or a paladin's laying on of hands) revives her long enough to deliver a last message to her benefactor. In this case, read or paraphrase the following:

Your efforts have at least brought the old woman to consciousness, but it's clear that she has been irreparably hurt: Half of her is paralyzed, the other half flails about wildly for support. Her good arm grabs your cloak, drawing you down, and she speaks forcefully.

"He took my daughter, and dared to laugh at the Vistani. You'll need the roses. From the one-winged gargoyle." It is difficult to make out her words, since half of her mouth is slack. "The roses are behind—"

Every word seems to be an effort for the old woman, and her eyes are losing their focus, but she keeps forcing the words out. "He's a monster. He must pay for what he's done to her. You'll help me, you'll fulfill the curse, won't you? Behind the gargoyle—"

A last shudder wracks her frail body, and she lies still.

There is nothing the PCs can do at this point, for Awilda is quite dead. If a PC cleric has access to a *speak with dead* spell, the somber spirit of Awilda appears, shakes her head, and slowly disappears without imparting any more useful information. Using this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

A careful search of the house reveals a host of strange, although hardly useful items, including a taroka deck (from *Forbidden Lore*), several loaded dice, a nonmagical crystal ball, piles of moldy clothing, a box full of costume jewelry, a rusty tea pot, a few stained teacups, kitchen utensils, and two bags of potatoes. A loose stone in the wall conceals a tin box that contains the pitiful remainder of Awilda's life savings: 3 gp, 27 sp, and 89 cp.

### Day Two: On the Trail of Roses and Gargoyles

The PCs will find nothing else of interest in Awilda's house, but their encounter with the gypsy should leave them with something to think about. Her death should inspire the adventurers to search the town more thoroughly, if they haven't already. The DM can stage further daytime encounters with townspeople like Christopher Barkos (area 1) to provide them with information from the "Adventure Background" section. Don't reveal too much at once: make the PCs earn the information.

From their preliminary snoopings, the PCs should realize that Awilda hated the mayor and blamed him for destroying her daughter's life (only partially true, since the party already met Eliza and saw her managing to survive at the start of the adventure). Furthermore, roses were to play some part in her revenge. It should take about a full day to explore town and quickly inspect areas 1-6.

If the PCs ask about gargoyles, most of the people questioned won't have the slightest idea what the PCs are asking about. Even if they describe the monster in detail (presuming they've seen one), the average Ungrader can't provide any useful information. Persistent questioning will pay off for the party in the long run, however. If the party hasn't already stumbled across the old meeting hall (area 8), just when they seem about ready to give up hope (night has fallen, and everyone is tired and hungry), they run across Frank Tubrigens, the town clerk. Work just let out at the town hall, and he wouldn't mind if the PCs bought him a drink at the Mushroom House. Frank can relate the following information about gargoyles:

"I've never seen the kind of monster you're describing. The closest things to it I've seen were the statues at the old town meeting hall, in the south quarter of town."

Frank can give the party directions to area 8, explaining that the old meeting hall doesn't see much use these days.

**Frank Tubrigens:** AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; I 14; ML 11.

### Early Evening: An Offered Ride

It should be night by the time the PCs visit the old meeting hall (area 8). If the party decides not to visit the hall during the second night (preferring to wait until the third day), stage this encounter when the PCs head back to their accommodations after interviewing Frank at the Mushroom House.

While walking down the street in the dark, you hear a light jingling behind you. In a few seconds, the sound of hoofbeats also reaches your ears. Not long after that, a large wooden sleigh comes into view, drawn by two bay horses, their thick wool blankets adorned with small round bells. A lone driver sits on a bench in the front, and a single passenger wearing a snowy white fur coat rests in the back, underneath a thick blanket. The driver brings the horses to a stop beside you.

The passenger pulls back the hood of his coat to reveal the face of a middle-aged man with thick black hair and a bushy beard shot with graying curls. His cheeks are flushed in the cold night air.

"Greetings! Allow me to introduce myself. I am Felix Hoyer, Ungrad's mayor and husband to the doctor you met last night. My wife mentioned that you looked like newcomers, and I now see that she was right. We don't get many travelers this time of year." His gray eyes scan your faces. He clucks to himself in dismay.

"And where are my manners? Here, you look frozen." He lifts up the edge of the fur blankets covering the twin, facing benches of the sleigh. "I'd be happy to give you a ride to wherever you are headed."

If the PCs accept, they will find it very warm with the mayor under the blankets (his flushed cheeks and body warmth result from an earlier feeding). During the trip, Hoyer makes small talk, offering the PCs a drink from a silver flask full of brandy. He asks them about their reasons for visiting, where they came from, etc. For the entire conversation, Hoyer uses his *ESP* to scan the PCs' minds for their true motives and daily activities since they arrived. If they mention their visit to Awilda and her sudden death, he shakes his head sadly.

> "That poor woman. She never could accept that her daughter died from White Fever. And you know how unbalanced those gypsies are to begin with. In her grief the unfortunate blamed me for the girl's death."

Hoyer uses his *ESP* to discern the PCs true feelings and sympathies about both Awilda and himself. After he lets the PCs off at their destination, Hoyer summons huge ravens to keep an eye on the party for the rest of the adventure (see area 8 for statistics).

If the PCs refuse to ride with the mayor, he simply shrugs and chuckles good naturedly to show he is not offended.

End the encounter by reading or paraphrasing the following to the players:

> During your conversation, a light snow has begun to fall. The large white flakes drift lazily downward, settling on the mayor's bushy hair and beard. He shivers slightly and pulls the white fur hood of his coat up over his head.
>
> "Well, now I must go and pick up my wife and head for home. Until we meet again," he says, raising a hand in a parting gesture.
>
> With a light crack of the driver's whip, the bays canter off down the street, the jingling of bells and muffled hoofbeats growing distant as the sleigh disappears around a street corner.

Hoyer goes directly to the hospital and picks up his wife, who sits opposite him in the sleigh. The driver then heads out the town's north gate and along the road to the Hoyer residence (area 9). Once there, the couple enters their home and uses their vampiric abilities to return to town unseen to feed. A few hours before dawn, they secretly return home to sleep during the daylight hours. At dusk, they fly back to town and return to their jobs, until early evening, before performing the routine all over again.

### Mid Evening: Eliza Again

Sooner or later, the PCs will return to the inn and go to sleep. One of the PCs wakes up to the sound of light tapping on the window pane. If the PC does nothing, the tapping moves to another PC's window until some brave heart finally goes to the window and looks out.

If they decided to go to the old meeting hall during the second night, this encounter takes place soon after they return. When a PC looks out the window, read or paraphrase the following:

> Clinging to the outside of the building, like a small, pallid spider, is the gaunt little girl you encountered just after you got to Ungrad. Dirt and branches are twisted into her dark, stringy hair, which is whipped furiously about by the snow-laden wind. One of her hands is pressed to the window pane, and you see her broken fingernails are choked with dirt and dried grass. She smiles innocently at you, baring small, pointed teeth.
>
> The girl starts to talk, but her tiny voice is overwhelmed by the thick windowpane and the howling wind outside. She motions for you to open the window.

If the PC refuses, Eliza goes to another PC and repeats her actions. If no one in the party opens a window for her, she pouts sadly and scuttles down the building out of sight.

If a brave PC opens the window, Eliza asks how her mother died. After the PC answers, she relates the following tale:

> "Mother always hated Felix after what he did to me." Seeing your expression, she adds, "Don't worry. I don't hurt anyone. My wolves give me what I need to live." Again that innocent smile and flash of small, pointed teeth.
>
> "Mother's angry. She talks to me in the storm." The girl motions to blizzard outside. Her thin brows wrinkle together as though she is remembering something. "She won't be happy until Felix is destroyed. He sleeps at home during the day. Kill him, and then you can leave Ungrad."
>
> With a giggle and a shy parting wave, she flips backward off the window sill and is swallowed by the night.

The storm is not Awilda's doing, and the PCs may leave town without destroying Felix, but Eliza has no intention of telling them so.

### Late Evening: Another House Call

The night passes slowly. Long after Eliza has left the PCs, Antianetta decides to pay another house call on the PC she drained the previous evening. She enters through the window in *gaseous form* (she obtained a standing invitation during the previous evening) and tries to *charm* those present into letting her feast. If she fails, she stays in *gaseous form* and retreats through the window. She is too wise to expose her identity needlessly.

If all the PCs in the room fail their saving throws vs. Antianetta's *charm,* allow PCs sleeping in nearby rooms to wake up if they roll a Wisdom check.

> Your eyes snap open and you realize that you are panting heavily. Were you having a nightmare? You remember hearing voices or shouting nearby, but now the inn is entombed in deathly silence.

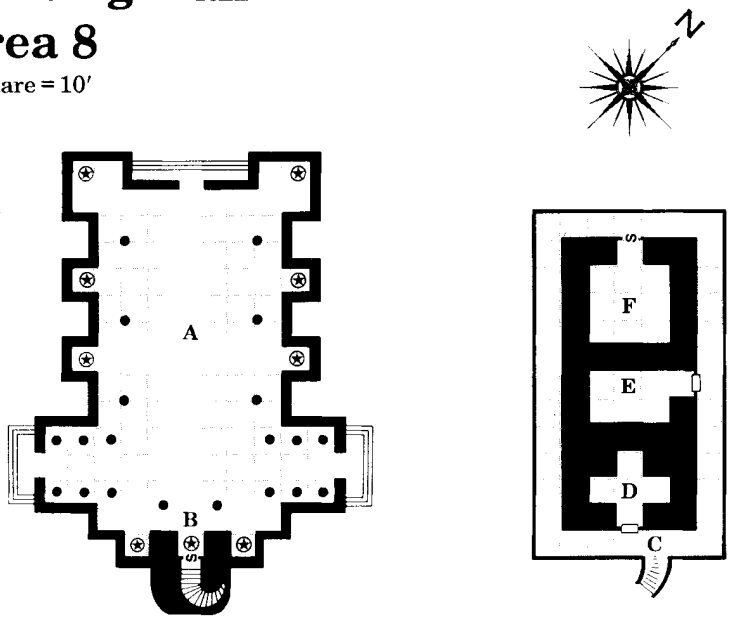
Keep close track of the time. Antianetta drains four Constitution points from each *charmed* PC in the room with her, one point per round. If the PCs in adjacent chambers wake up and waste time pulling on armor, the vampire might finish her snack and retreat. See the *PH,* page 76, for time required to don armor.

If the awakened PCs try snooping about, read the following to the players when their characters enter the chamber with Antianetta:

> Opening the doors, you immediately notice all of your comrades asleep on the floor. A woman with chestnut hair is bent over one of your friend's wrists. She looks up, her icy blue eyes wide with surprise. Her face is smeared with blood. She hisses angrily at you, baring bloody, pointed teeth. With a shock of realization, you recognize the face of the doctor you met in the street the previous evening.

# Meeting Hall
# Area 8

1 square = 10′




**Ground Level** **Crypt Level**

Have each conscious PC in the room make fear and horror checks. Antianetta tries to *charm* the rest of the party, using her magical dust to incapacitate those who resist. If she succeeds, each PC wakes up in the morning drained of four Constitution points. If the battle goes well for the party and Antianetta is wounded to half hit points, turned, or presented with a holy symbol (or magical rose from area 8F), she assumes *gaseous form* and flees through the window.

After this encounter, the rest of the second evening passes uneventfully.

**8. Old Meeting Hall.** This was once a stone temple dedicated to a lawful-good deity (any deity common to the campaign and familiar to the PCs). The building was transported to Ravenloft, along with the rest of Valachan, when the domain was formed over a century ago for Baron Urik von Kharkov. Since that time, the building's former purpose has been completely forgotten and it is now used as a meeting hall for the townspeople (the new town hall, area 6, contains only offices and small meeting rooms).

The building is an imposing but decrepit structure. The spires on the roof have long since crumbled into ruin; their stubby remains are now the nests of giant black ravens, who perch amid the snow and moss-choked masonry. Tall gothic-arched windows gape in the facade, framed by triangles of dirty, jagged glass. A pair of rotten, iron-bound doors hang like crooked front teeth in the middle of the front wall.

The entire outside of the building is covered with statues, although their exact appearance cannot be discerned beneath the carpet of brown moss and dirty snow. The decayed, amorphous shapes cling to the outer walls, sad and silent witnesses of the building's former splendor.

The ravens on the building are Hoyer's servants, keeping tabs on the party. They attack only in self defense.

**Huge ravens** (8): INT low; AL N; AC 6; MV 1, fly 27; HD 1−1; hp 4 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; SA eye peck (10% chance victim loses eye); SZ M (4′-6′ wingspread); ML 11; XP 35; MC5.

The party should have no trouble entering the structure through the rotten doors.

**8A. Meeting Hall.**

The building is simply an empty, roughly rectangular hall, 80′ wide and 160′ long. A cold wind blows light snow through the open windows, howling plaintively as it shifts the low snowdrifts in the corners. A few ravens from outside have settled on the lower sills of the open windows and appear curious at your intrusion. Their presence seems vaguely sinister and strangely purposeful in the desolate emptiness of the hall.

Ornate stone columns reach up to a sooty, vaulted ceiling above, and weathered sculptures of various monsters adorn the walls. Many have been rendered unrecognizable by the moss and mold, but some have discernable shapes.

The DM should describe statues and symbols common to a lawful-good religion in the current campaign. There are quite a few gargoyle statues here, many of them cracked or decayed with age. Only one of the statues is missing a wing (the one in the central alcove on the southeast wall). If the PCs examine the area around it carefully, they have a 1-in-6 chance of discovering a secret door (area 8B).

**8B. Secret Door.** The secret door is opened by pulling down on the gargoyle statue's intact wing. A 3′ × 5′ section of wall in the alcove behind the statue slides back a few inches, releasing a gust of putrid air. All PCs standing in the alcove for the first turn after the door is opened must roll a saving throw vs. poison to resist being infected by the wasting disease previously described in the "Haunted Middens" encounter.

Opening the ancient door, ruined after years of exposure to Ungrad's moldering environment, requires two separate PCs to roll successful open-doors checks. It can be pushed completely shut from the inside, but this could be a fatal move. There is no way to open the door other than to knock it down. This should prove difficult and very time consuming but not impossible.

Since there are no handles on the outside of the door, there is no way to pull the door completely shut from the

outside because the closing mechanism has decayed. Unless they think up a solution to this problem (perhaps using magic), the PCs will have to leave the door at least partially open when they leave the crypt. This is significant only because the crypt's single sentient inhabitant, the wraith Hess (see area 8E), has sought to escape for years but has been thwarted by the sealed secret door.

Unless stated otherwise, there is no light in the crypt.

> The spiral stairs behind the secret door are choked with moist reddish mold that coats the flagstones to a depth of several inches. The putrid air is redolent with decay. A disgusting, musty sweetness from the mold on the floor easily overcomes the pungent aroma of the thick brown toadstools protruding from the walls and ceiling. Inch-long maggotlike insects squirm along the slimy surface of the toadstools, occasionally disappearing within the tiny holes riddling the fungi.

Anyone who failed a horror check at the "Haunted Middens" must make another horror check here or be unable to proceed down the stairs. Each party member must make a successful Constitution check to go downstairs without retching from the nauseating stench and sights. PCs who fail lose two points of Strength until they rest in a well-ventilated area for 1-6 turns.

PCs foolish enough to touch or taste the fungi are automatically infested with 5-20 rot grubs from the toadstools. A limitless number of these creatures live in the mushrooms covering the walls and ceiling of the stairwell, but they leave visitors alone unless prodded.

**Rot grubs:** INT non; AL N; AC 9; MV 1; hp 1 each; THAC0 nil; #AT nil; Dmg nil; SA kill victim in 1-3 turns; SZ T; ML 5; XP 15; MC2.

Victims must immediately apply open flame to the wound. Each application of flame inflicts 1-6 hp damage on the victim, but kills 2-20 grubs in the process. After 1-6 rounds the grubs have burrowed too deep to burn, and the victim's death can be averted only by casting a *cure disease* spell.

The mold on the floor, nourished by the droppings of the rot grubs, is fatal (save vs. poison or die in 2-5 turns) to anyone foolish enough to taste it.

**8C. Outer Crypt.**

> The stairway opens into a 15'-wide vaulted corridor carpeted in white furry mold. Small greenish mushrooms poke through the mold carpeting, lending it a mottled and diseased appearance.
>
> Narrow shelves line the walls, filled with ancient, decayed corpses. The burial shrouds are intact on some, mercifully concealing the corrupted remains beneath. Black mushrooms with yellow spots have infested the visible corpses, filling many skeletons like bloated, diseased organs.
>
> The pungent stench of the mold and fungi completely overpowers any aroma from the decaying corpses.

Every turn the PCs spend in the corridor, there is a 1-in-6 chance of attracting the attention of Hess, the wraith from area 8E. If this happens, read or paraphrase the following:

> The utter silence of the crypt is interrupted by the faint screech of metal against stone. A few seconds later, a long and low moan rolls down the corridor from the north. You can see a pair of malevolent, glowing red eyes floating toward you.

Given their grisly surroundings, have the PCs roll fear checks. Hess fights until turned or wounded to half hit points, after which he retreats and hides in his lair. The wraith's statistics appear in area 8E.

Although it is usual practice among commoners to bury their dead in the family middens, rich or important Ungraders often preferred a formal burial. The entrance to the crypts was kept secret, so that superstitious family members wouldn't gather the body after the ceremony and place it in their middens, where it was thought the spirit of the dead would remain to protect and nourish the family. Now that the original purpose of the temple and the crypt entrance have been forgotten, rich citizens are buried in private crypts on family property. Ungraders do not like to be far from their dead ancestors.

There is nothing to be gained by poking around the corpses on the burial shelves. PCs doing so must make a saving throw vs. poison with a −2 penalty or contract a lung blight that is fatal within a week unless cured by magic or the healing proficiency. No treasure is buried with the rotting bodies. All of the fungi and mold in this area is poisonous (save vs. poison or die in 1-6 turns) if consumed.

**8D. Private Crypt.** The entrance to this area is blocked by a locked iron portal that has rusted shut. Opening the door makes quite a bit of noise; the sound has a 1-in-4 chance of attracting the wraith from area 8E.

> This appears to be a private burial vault. Three stone caskets rest atop biers in raised alcoves on three walls of the room. A carved stone effigy of an armored knight, hands crossed on top of a sword, adorns the lid of each casket. Thick growths of saffron mold cover much the walls, floor, and ceiling of the vault, filling the chamber with its pungent, acrid stench.

PCs crossing the chamber to the caskets must be very careful to avoid the growths of yellow mold, which have a 50% chance of filling the room with poisonous spores if roughly handled. All PCs caught in the room when this happens must save vs. poison or die. Fire destroys the mold, and a *continual light* spell renders it dormant for an hour.

**Yellow mold:** INT non; AL N; AC 9; MV nil; HD nil; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA poison spores; SD affected only by fire; MR 20%; SZ M; ML nil; XP nil; MC2.

Moving the casket lids requires an open-doors roll. They are all trapped.

*Northeast*: Three scythe blades spring out at shin level as soon as the lid is moved; victims gain no shield bonus to armor class. The blades strike PCs who are moving the lid or standing close by, attacking with THAC0 17 and inflicting 1-8 hp damage each.

*Northwest:* Six darts shoot out of the wall at chest level as soon as the lid is moved. They strike PCs moving the lid with THAC0 15 but inflict only 1-3 hp damage each.

*Southwest:* Moving the lid causes an audible click, but the trap mechanism has long since moldered away.

Triggering the traps on the northeast and northwest caskets has a 50% chance to agitate the yellow mold, filling the chamber with its deadly spores. Each casket contains the remains of a knight, his armor and weapons long

since rusted to scrap. In addition, 1-3 small clay urns filled with caked white powder (radiating faint magic) are found in each casket. A vial of holy water mixed with an urn of the powder will rehydrate one dose of the dried *Keoghtom's ointment.*

**8E. Private Crypt.** Opening the rusted iron door to this chamber requires a successful open-doors check. The noise will alert Hess, the crypt's sole undead inhabitant, unless he has already been encountered and destroyed. If cornered, Hess will defend his crypt to the death.

**Hess** (wraith): INT very; AL LE; AC 4; MV 12, fly 24 (B); HD 5+3; hp 25; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA experience drain; SD silver or magical weapon to hit, standard undead immunities; SZ M; ML 15; XP 3,000; MC1.

Hess was once a stubborn and superstitious noble. Although Hess wrote in his will that he wanted to be buried in the family middens, his widow ordered him buried in the temple, far from the family residence (he was less than kind to his wife while he was alive).

Hess was so outraged at being buried off family property that he rose from death as a wraith. He has been seeking to escape the crypt and return to his ancestral home for the past few decades. Only the closed secret door at area 8B, which the PCs have so thoughtfully opened for him, has kept him confined.

It is unlikely that his home's current inhabitants would welcome their ancestor's return, since Hess, furious over his botched burial arrangements, vowed long ago to slay them all. If the wraith escapes the crypt, pick a house near the Inn of Quiet Repose as Hess' newest haunt.

The crypt is a small vaulted chamber containing a single alcove with an open stone casket. Inside, the PCs can find rusted, useless armor and the cracked bone hilt of a sword, protruding from a rotten leather scabbard. A PC who takes the time to inspect the blade will find it keen edged and unblemished by rust or decay. Although the blade must be given a new hilt and fitted for a new scabbard, it is a perfectly serviceable *long sword +1, +3 vs. regenerating creatures.* The blade glows only in the presence of a regenerating opponent. Refitting the blade should take one of the skilled craftsmen in town less than a day and cost only a few gp.

**8F. Chapel of the White Rose.** This chamber is hidden by an enchanted secret door. Neutral or evil creatures have no chance of locating it. The door glows with blue light if a lawful-good PC approaches within 5', but neutral-good and chaotic-good PCs have the normal (1-in-6) chance of detecting it.

The chapel is decorated with mosaics and icons typical of an appropriate lawful-good deity from the DM's campaign. Use the following description as a guide:

> This small underground chamber is a chapel of some kind. The entire chamber is bathed in cool silvery light that radiates from a tall bush of white roses. The rosebush has sprouted from an eruption of earth and floor tiles in the chapel's center.
>
> The interior walls are covered with faded murals depicting a white rosebush in various stages of growth. The pictures are utterly free of the moldy decay you've seen everywhere else in the building. A small altar covered with runes and holy symbols stands at the center of the wall opposite the door.
>
> The air here is clean and pure. A comforting feeling of warmth and well-being embraces you. Not since you were swallowed by the cold, snowy avalanche have you felt so much at peace, so safe.

The rosebush has seven flowers, each a *rose of eternal slumber* (see sidebar). The PCs are free to prune up to six flowers without permanently harming the parent bush, but if the party removes all seven, read the following to the players:

> When you pick the last flower, you immediately realize that you have made a grievous error. Within seconds, the bush's silvery glow begins to fade and its green leaves to wilt. Soon after, the leaves shrivel and cascade to the floor.

Unless the party does something quickly, they will have killed the sacred shrubbery. The only way to prevent the bush from dying is to regraft the cut rose, using a paladin's laying on of hands, any clerical *cure* spell, or an appropriate druid spell (like *plant growth*). A generous DM might allow potions of *plant growth* or a successful application of the agriculture proficiency to heal the plant.

If the party fails to remedy the situation within a turn, the last shriveled leaf of the bush falls to the ground, and the holy light in the chapel is forever extinguished. A lawful-good priest or paladin in the party must perform a small quest (determined by the DM) as atonement for the deed—if the PC ever escapes from Ravenloft.

The inscriptions on the altar describe the powers of the rose (see the sidebar), and are written in a lawful-good liturgical script. A lawful-good priest or paladin can read the writings by making a successful Wisdom check (priests of other alignments suffer a +4 penalty on their Wisdom checks). A *comprehend languages* or *read magic* spell also deciphers the inscription on the altar.

The PCs can stay here as long as they like, to recuperate and regain spells. Nothing will bother them while they remain in this chamber.

### Emerging from the Crypts

Informed by his raven spies of the PCs' actions, Hoyer sends 12 common wolves to area 8A to ambush the party when they emerge from the crypts.

The wolves are frighteningly unnatural; they are completely and utterly silent. Even though the party sees them barking and growling, they make absolutely no sound. (Use the wolf statistics from "Into the Mists.")

As soon as the fight commences, the eight huge ravens from the upper temple join the fray as well. These creatures all fight until slain. This encounter occurs whether the PCs explore the crypts during the second night or the third day.

### Day Three: Vampire Hunting

The party has an eight-hour day to fully explore the old meeting hall (if they haven't done so during the previous night). A few discrete inquiries reveal that the Hoyer residence lies two miles north along the road out of town. The party should have little trouble getting there during daylight, either afoot or on horseback, although they might be a little rushed if they explore area 8 first. The trek should be bitterly cold but uneventful.

## The Hoyer Residence

The forest opens into a clearing, outlined by the crumbling, snow-covered remains of a small stone wall. At the center of the clearing rests a small, single-story stone house with a peaked roof. A dilapidated wooden structure stands nearby. The stone house is decorated with crenelations, small turrets, two ornate chimneys, and long arched windows with closed shutters, which make the residence seem taller than it actually is. Curiously, the moss covering the house exterior with a uniform thickness has a managed, almost sculpted look about it.

**A. Carriage House.** The purpose of this shed is clear from the furrows of sleigh runners and hoofprints in the snow leading from its wide entrance, which is closed but unlocked. The carriage house has empty stalls for two horses, a vacant place for a sleigh, and a covered two-horse carriage for use in the warmer months. A small, cold forge and iron-working tools (hammers of different sizes, nails, a stout anvil, a thick crowbar, etc.) for repairing horseshoes takes up a corner of the building. Tack, harness, and hay for the horses are stored in the loft above.

The amount of mold and decay on the interior surfaces is at a minimum since this place is used a lot.

**B. Entrance.**

Chained to the exterior wall near the front door are the two largest wolves you have ever seen. Despite their malevolent stares, they have beautiful silvery white fur.

These winter wolves take immediate notice of any approaching PCs and bark furiously. The chains holding them in place are thoroughly corroded and have a 10% cumulative chance per round of snapping. If the PCs attack, the enraged wolves burst their shackles immediately.

**Winter wolves** (2): INT average; AL NE; AC 5; MV 18; HD 6; hp 37, 28; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SA frost breath (6-24 hp); SD immune to cold, suffer +1 hp damage/die from heat; SZ L; ML 13; XP 975; MC1.

All of the entrances to the main house—the shuttered windows and front door—are tightly closed and barred from the inside. The door and the shutters are AC 7 and each has 20 hp if the PCs break, bash, or hack them down.

If the PCs fight and smash their way in, the noise definitely rouses Felix Hoyer (see area F). He waits until the PCs reach his coffin before making his move.

**C. Living Area.**

The inside of the house appears to be one large chamber, decorated like a sitting room. The peaked ceiling soars above your heads, its rafters choked with white mold. Large sofas and padded chairs are arranged around the perimeter of an ornate paisley rug in the center of the room under a dark and dusty crystal chandelier. A wide, cold fireplace takes up much of the eastern wall, and a harpsichord dominates the southeast corner. The air feels clammy and moist, with a faint, lingering odor of mold. Surprisingly, the house furnishings are untouched by the translucent mold that clings to every visible stone surface.

A monstrous wolf head hangs over the fireplace over a tarnished silver plaque inscribed with the words "Loup Garou." A blackened iron blunderbuss sits on the mantelpiece below it. A few low tables in the room are covered with small statues of wolves, panthers, and cats.

The walls are hung with paintings of strange, somber landscapes and family portraits. One of the landscapes catches your eyes immediately. The painting depicts a mountainous valley overlooking a town and wide lake. A ruined castle broods from a tall mountaintop, shrouded in mist, and a troupe of gypsies dances around a bonfire along the lake shore. For a second your eyes make out the features of Eliza's mother among the shadows of the gypsy camp, but then the vision is gone and you are left with nothing but the normal painting and a cold knot in the pit of your stomach.

Antianetta collected these seven paintings during her adventures as a traveling country doctor. The painting of the castle and lake depicts Barovia, in the heart of Ravenloft. The DM can show some of the castle or family pictures included with the boxed set, to simulate the other paintings around the room.

This is a prime opportunity to drop clues or hooks for future Ravenloft adventures. Perhaps the party finds a small locket or carved cameo between the cushions of the couch, depicting the face of a beautiful woman. Or a PC might find a cryptic note stuffed under one of the animal statuettes.

Although many of the items in the room are interesting, very few are actually important or valuable. One of the animal figurines is actually a *figurine of wondrous power.* The other 24 figurines are worth 1-10 gp each. The seven paintings are valuable, worth 100-400 gp each. The blunderbuss on the mantelpiece is so rusted that it cannot even

### Roses of Eternal Slumber

These powerful symbols of good were created to combat vampires. Once cut from a parent bush, the roses retain their magical potency for seven days. During that time, they have the following powers:

1. Anyone holding a rose is immune to a vampire's *charm.* The rose breaks *charms* previously placed by a vampire, though victims will feel an unexplainable aversion to holding the flower.
2. If presented forcefully to a vampire, this rose acts as a lawful-good holy symbol.
3. If placed on a coffin, a *rose of eternal slumber* traps a vampire within until it is removed by another creature. This power gave the roses their name.
4. If used to strike a vampire (requiring a successful attack roll in combat), a rose inflicts the same damage as holy water (2d4 + 1). This destroys the rose.
5. A wreath fashioned from four roses, if placed around the neck of a vampire, has the same effect as full sunlight. Weak vampires (those less than 100 years old, such as Antianetta) are rendered immediately powerless, while older vampires can resist the wreath's effects for a limited duration, depending on their age. These older vampires try everything in their power to remove or destroy the wreath before it renders them powerless. A vampire can destroy the wreath with a successful bend bars/lift gates roll but suffers 8d4 + 4 hp damage in the process.

A bush of *roses of eternal slumber* can grow only on ground consecrated to a lawful-good deity. The bush continues to thrive until all of its flowers are cut off, after which it quickly dies. The secret of cultivating these flowers is closely guarded by lawful-good temples.

be loaded, and there is no smoke powder or shot to be found anywhere in the house. The harpsichord and furniture are valuable but hardly transportable.

One of the paintings conceals a secret door leading to area D.

**D. Laboratory.** This room contains the small laboratory where Antianetta works on various projects using the strange mushrooms that grow in the middens (area E).

> Two work tables line the east and west walls of the narrow chamber, and a small chimney fills the southern wall. The eastern table is covered with alchemical equipment, and the western one is being used as a desk. A few books sit between two skull bookends on the desk.
>
> A raven sits on one of the skulls, its black beady eyes watching you intently. It cocks its head and squawks a single word distinctly: "Nevermore."

PCs who enter the room uncautiously fall through a trapdoor that deposits them in area E. The door springs open when the first PC reaches the middle of the room. PCs behind the first are entitled to a Dexterity check to avoid falling after their unlucky comrade. The trapdoor drops PCs directly into the middens below. Although the fall causes no damage, it is an extremely unpleasant experience (see area E for details). The trapdoor is the only entrance to the basement level (the vampires simply assume *gaseous form* and descend).

The alchemical equipment, while valuable, is very difficult to transport. It is not very interesting since there is currently no work in progress. A PC with herbalism or healing proficiency will note many small containers of herbal medicines, including belladonna, mandrake, wolfsbane, and several unrecognizable fungal medicines. Three of the four vials of clear liquid lined up along the back of the table are potions of *healing, extra-healing,* and *delusion.* The fourth vial is poison (type G).

The books on the other table are Antianetta's texts on herbalism, healing, and brewery. Anyone who studies them can learn the matching proficiency in two months for a single proficiency slot. Folded in one of the books is a scroll containing the spell *protection from lycanthropes.*

The raven is Antianetta's pet, Horace. He is quite intelligent though not particularly aggressive. If the PCs approach too closely, he flies into the rafters.

**Horace** (raven): INT low; AL N; AC 7; MV 1, fly 36; HD ¼; hp 2; THAC0 20, #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA eye peck (10% chance victim loses eye in attack); SZ S (2' wingspread); ML 6; XP 15; MC5.

**E. Middens.** The trapdoor in area D drops the PCs directly into the overgrown remains of the house middens.

> The floor drops out beneath you and you plummet into darkness. You land a heartbeat later on something soft and moist that breaks your fall, but when you inhale, your lungs fill with putrid, corrupted air reeking of decay. You hear a small chittering around you, like the noise of a thousand small chitinous bodies crawling over one another. Something long, thin, and slimy squiggles across your hands and face, making you sit bolt upright in the darkness to shake it off.

Have each PC roll a fear check, with a +4 bonus (because of the darkness, the PC can't really see what he has landed in). If the PC produces a light, read the following aloud:

> You are standing in an underground chamber, completely overgrown with disgusting fungi and crawling insects. Most of the mushrooms are dark, twisted stools covered with furry bumps. Others have delicate white stems and list to the side, like so many tilted parasols. A squirming carpet of moist earthworms covers the floor, their black slimy bodies bloated with corrupted fungi. Over them all, a countless multitude of swarming centipedes fills the room with the sound of chitinous bodies rubbing against one another. Some of them are over a foot long, and the huge bugs are scuttling toward you rapidly!

At this point, the PC must roll new fear and horror checks (−4 penalty if the PC has ever failed a previous horror check in the presence of fungi). The stench of the rotting compost and fungi is so overpowering that PCs in the room must make Constitution checks each round to avoid retching uncontrollably for 1-4 rounds (the victim loses a like number of Strength points until removed to fresh air for one turn).

PCs in the room are immediately attacked by a score of giant centipedes, their countless feet undulating in a black wave over their smaller cousins during their approach.

**Giant centipedes** (20): INT non; AL N; AC 9; MV 15; HD ¼; hp 2 each; THAC0 20, #AT 1; Dmg nil; SA paralytic poison; SZ S (1'); ML 6, XP 35; MC1.

The PCs cannot avoid entering this room and searching it if they are going to track down the vampires. After the giant centipedes have been eliminated and the walls searched, the PCs can discover a completely overgrown and rusted iron door. The door has a small peephole that the vampires use to enter their lair in *gaseous form* (see area F).

Getting through this door is a problem; it is not only stuck, but also double barred from the inside. Edged weapons are useless. Blunt weapons can be used to bash down the door (consider the door AC 3 with 50 hp). If the party has no blunt weapons, some tools can be scavenged from the forge in area A (treat as clubs).

**F. Crypt.**

> Two unadorned stone coffins sit in the center of a vaulted chamber whose walls and ceiling are carpeted in shaggy black moss. A small open chest stands in front of the door, filled to the brim with gold.

Unless the party has approached in complete silence, Felix is wide awake by the time the PCs make it through the door. He clings to the wall above the door and springs down on the party when they advance across the threshold to inspect the chest. In melee, Felix uses the tactics described in the "Important NPCs" sidebar.

Just after Felix pounces from above, the lid of Antianetta's coffin slowly moves aside. Unless a quick-witted PC drops one of the magical roses on the lid, the party will have a second vampire to contend with!

As soon as the PCs display a magical rose like a holy symbol to ward off either of the vampires, or place a wreath of four of these roses around one of the vampires' necks, read or paraphrase the following:

> For the first time, the vampire's arrogant expression shows a glimmer of fear and pain. A silvery white

glow shines from the roses, filling the room with a holy light. The black moss covering the walls and ceiling bursts into flame, and soon the room's walls are a mass of teeming, sulphurous smoke.

The boiling smoke disgorges an apparition resembling Eliza's mother. She raises an accusing finger at the vampiric mayor.

*"For turning the life of my child into an abomination, I curse you! Behold the rose, Hoyer. It is your undoing!"*

The black curtain of smoke prevents either of the vampires from assuming *gaseous form* and escaping. As soon as Felix is reduced to 0 hp, the vampire screams in fear as the wall of smoke collapses inward, enveloping his *gaseous form*. The vampire's body reforms from the smoke and slowly crumbles into dust.

If a quick-thinking PC grasps the chest during the battle or just after Felix is destroyed, he will later find that it contains 627 gp, four pieces of jewelry, and 10 gems (value determined by the DM, with the most valuable gem actually a *jewel of attacks*).

## Concluding The Adventure

As soon as Felix's body has crumbled into dust, the party is enveloped by black smoke. If Antianetta was not destroyed, they hear her vowing revenge as the smoke turns to white, clammy mist. They also hear Eliza's childlike voice in the distance, bidding them farewell.

After you have wandered in the mists for what seems like eternity, the spirit of Awilda coalesces in front of you, her eyes harshly triumphant. Before she can congratulate you, however, her face contorts in fear and she cries out, not unlike the final agony of Felix Hoyer. A dark cloud engulfs her shade and she is gone.

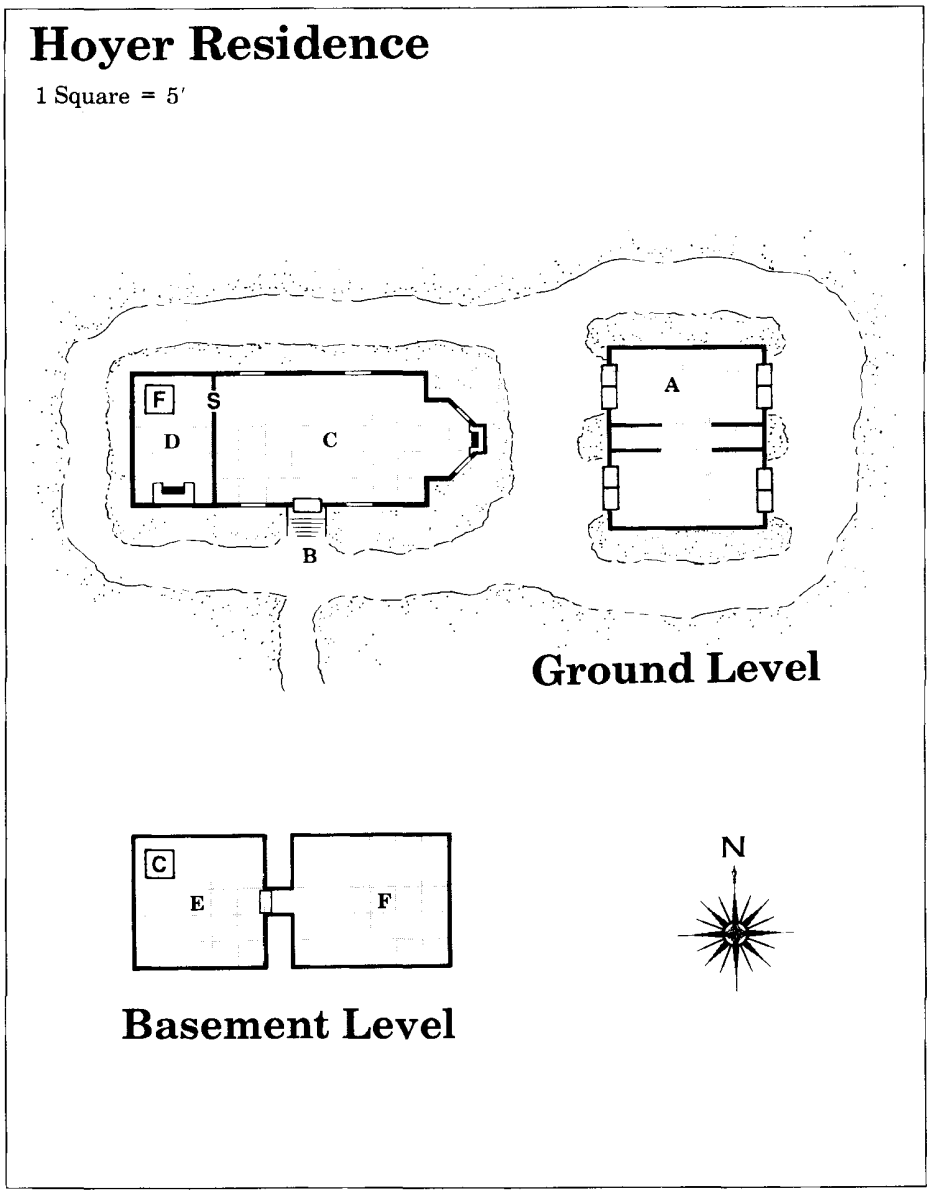
The Mists soon deposit the party wherever the DM wishes: another domain of Ravenloft or the party's point of departure in the regular campaign world.

Even if the PCs do return home, the party's experiences in Ungrad should have some lasting effects. At the very least, the PCs will have a healthy fear or aversion to vampires, ravens, wolves, fungi, mold, moss, and mushrooms. The strength of the aversion depends on how many horror checks were failed. Whenever they see one of these "triggers," they should react with fear or loathing.

If the DM continues with a Ravenloft campaign, Antianetta can become a long-term enemy of the party. If she was imprisoned by a white rose on her coffin, either her pet raven Horace or one of her human servants will soon remove it (no more than a week or so). Antianetta resumes her lifestyle as a traveling doctor and could resurface in any domain, just when the party needs a physician's services the most.

The destruction of Eliza's vampiric master also releases the child vampire from Ungrad. Eliza might turn up at any time in the future with motives of her own. Though she is inevitably drawn to the scent of blood, she might use her undead abilities and canine companions to help the party if they can help her achieve her own goals.

There is nothing to be done for the vengeful Awilda, however. Separated from the child she loves for all eternity, she must pay the price of revenge. Ω



*Continued from page 7*

baron had been kidnapped, and they went off over the hills to rescue her. Before they returned, the slithering tracker from "Through the Night" (issue #29) came into town, and the inhabitants evacuated. After unsuccessfully fighting the "vampire," the PCs realized the townspeople must have gone to Trellmont, the village in "A Local Legend" (issue #31). Here the berbalang was able to make his escape, and will be back to h(a)unt the party.

Now, even though they completed their first mission, someone had to clear out the "vampire" before the townspeople could go back. This second time the party was victorious, but one member died. Back in Trellmont, the party became indebted to a local wizard when they asked him to revive their dead companion. The wizard is going to send them to fetch a book from Loudwater, where "The Lurkers in the Library" (issue #9) will take place. On the way there, the PCs will have a chance to rescue Silverlance from "Alicorn" (issue #33). Perhaps I will introduce them to Mad Meerim of "Irongard" (issue #18) when they reach Loudwater. Since first entering the small hamlet, however, the party has been hearing about and is now headed into the hills to rout the two dwarves from the *Book of Lairs II* (REF4, page 51).

Remember, you are the DM. You can tell the party where it is going to go. By being prepared, you won't have to hit them over the head to get them to go there. Better yet, you can ask the players where they want to go, and then prepare a series of adventures to get them there.

Tim Joyce
Dolton, Illinois

## *Oddball Monsters & Their Friends*

I am the DM (9 times out of 10) for a very diverse group of folks. Ages range from 16 to 50 years old and occupations include everything from ditch-diggers to designers, students to businessmen. This diversity has greatly enhanced game play, bringing several different attitudes to the battlefield. Your magazine has also been a great help. I'm a nine-to-fiver with a family, so I seldom have time to put together a truly exciting and well-organized adventure, but thanks to your magazine I don't have to sweat it anymore.

I recently bought several issues of your magazine (issues #34, 36, 37, & 39) and drew from each one to put together a series of adventures that will take the party from one end of the Forgotten Realms to the other. Some adventures, such as "Granite Mountain Prison," were a little difficult to place. Others, such as "On Wings of Darkness," not only fit right in, but added to the depth of our game setting.

Unfortunately, there is one minor flaw with your adventures. To use them to their fullest requires one to have access to all the various *Monstrous Compendiums* and Appendices. I, however, am unable to purchase any more (my wife said so), so when a monster comes up that I am unfamiliar with, I am at a loss. I'm not suggesting you give a complete write-up for each monster, that wouldn't be economical. What I would like to see is a small description of the more elaborate monsters' appearances and special attacks or defenses. For instance, in "Asflag's Unintentional Emporium" (issue #36), you had an adherer whose special attack was adhesion. Does it stick to a character when it strikes? I don't know.

Other than this little bit of nitpicking, though, my group thoroughly enjoys the adventures in your magazine and I find them well-organized and darn fun to DM. Thanks for the help and the excitement.

Thomas M. Grafius
Williamsport, Pennsylvania

*You might want to consider getting your diverse group to agree on putting a few dollars together to buy the crucial references you need. Authors, remember that many players don't have access to everything ever published. Stick to the core monsters from the* Monstrous Manual *(available in July) for generic adventures, and use others sparingly.*

## *A BIG Test*

Greetings from Down Under (our Prime Minister believes Australians should foster a cultured image, so I'm not saying "G'day"). Firstly, I enjoy your magazine just the way it is, with all the various campaign scenarios. If something doesn't fit, I change it. The story is the main meal, the setting is just garnishing. Secondly, you may be interested in my recent use of DUNGEON modules. My group is currently exploring module I5 *The Tomb of Martek,* in which there are three out of six crystal minarets to acquire. The party is teleported to the vicinity of the minarets and must complete a mini-adventure or test to acquire them. In my modified version, all six had to be acquired and the altered settings included:

Test of Fire: "Green Lady's Sorrow" (issue #35)
Test of Ice: White Dragon's Lair (homemade module)
Test of Fear: A combination of Crypt of Al-Alisk (from I5) and "The Year of Priest's Defiance" (issue #35)
Test of Death: Rites of Terror from RR2 *The Book of Crypts*
Test of Time: "Bane of the Shadowborn" (issue #31)
Test of Compassion: "Beyond the Glittering Veil" (issue #31)

All adventures were modified to varying degrees to fit with the overall scenario. The first four Tests have been completed by my group, and the party is recovering from being severely mauled in the Test of Death. Everyone has enjoyed the variety provided thus far. There was an unexpected requirement for a further desert adventure after the Test of Fear, so for the next playing session I quickly inserted an altered "Telar in Norbia" (issue #31) into the campaign, which worked very well. By coincidence I only used the modules from two DUNGEON magazines, but when I was considering which to utilize I considered many modules from many issues. Thanks to DUNGEON Magazine, I had the luxury of choice. I have many more DUNGEON modules earmarked for the party, but first they have to survive the final two tests and complete *The Tomb of Martek.* See ya!

Rick Underwood
Kambah, Australia

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ISBN 1-56076-780-4